GOLDEN TREASURY

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A

GOLDEN TREASURY

FOR THE

CHILDREN OF GOD

WHOSE TREASURE IS IN HEAVEN:

CONSISTING OF

Select Texts of the Holy Scriptures

WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS IN PROSE AND VERSE FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR

By C. H. VON BOGATZKY.

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PREFACE.

BOGATZKY'S GOLDEN TREASURY has long been known to many Christians who are accustomed to the use of books of devotion in the English language.

The Lutheran Board of Publication, in putting forth a new edition of Bogatzky, were led to pursue such a course as justifies them in saying of this edition, what cannot be said of any other, that it is a fair and honest translation of the original German. A comparison of German and English copies revealed the fact that scarcely less than one-half of the daily exercises of the German work were omitted in the English editions, whilst the omissions were supplied by exercises drawn avowedly from many other sources, both ancient and modern. The omissions were in many instances of such a character as to awaken on the part of the Board an earnest desire

to have them restored to their appropriate places,—they consisted so often of striking expressions of the heroic faith and deep devotion of that man of God, Martin Luther, whose life and labours were so full of illustrations of the grand principle that he contended for,—justification by faith in Jesus Christ; they presented the Lutheran Church so often as uttering its faithful testimony on behalf of the word and the sacraments, and insisting upon it that in Christ Jesus nothing availeth but a new creature.

The present editor, having been charged with this duty by the Board, has undertaken to dispose of the work in the following manner.

All the exercises found in the common English edition which proved to be faithful translations of the original have been retained. In these cases, however, it was discovered that the German *verses* of Bogatzky were not always translated; but, as the original English verses substituted for them were in such good taste, so well chosen, so appropriate to their several subjects, and so accordant with the original verses themselves, they were in many cases permitted to stand. In some instances, when a translation from the original was required, the editor has ventured to substitute, instead of Bogatzky's

verses, a translation of some familiar and appropriate German hymn, as found in the *Lyra Germanica*. He was the more ready to do so, because the latter appeared to be so true an echo of the former. Yet in very many cases the attempt has been made to give the original German verses in English rhyme. Sometimes the metre of the German has been retained, but more frequently the metres most familiar to English ears have been preferred.

The author of the Golden Treasury, Charles Henry von Bogatzky, was born in the year 1690, and experienced at a very early age the gracious influences of the word and Spirit of God upon his soul. Having commenced the study of the law in the year 1713, at the University of Jena, he associated with a few congenial friends in constant intercourse with God and in earnest efforts to strengthen his inner life by faith. Upon his removal to Halle in 1715, he became connected with the so-called *Pietists* there; and it was not long before, yielding to what he believed was a Divine indication, he devoted his whole attention to the study of theology. As early as 1716, he was in the habit of selecting a few passages of Scripture appropriate to particular occasions, accompanying them with some devout

practical reflections and then circulating them among his most intimate friends. These exercises were so pleasing to the devout Henry, Count Reuss, that he greatly encouraged their author to increase their number and to prepare a work of the kind for general circulation through the press. This was the origin of the Golden Treasury.

Its growth, however, was so gradual, during the course of several editions, that it reached its full size, supplying a portion for every day of the year, only in 1734. To these daily exercises we may apply in particular what he says of his devotional works in general:—"They were the fruit of the prayers and supplications, and the numerous trials, exercises, and purifications, of many years. My own weakness and tribulation prompted me to write many of them; and the Lord permitted me to be the first to enjoy them, and thereby strengthened my faith."

In an interesting memoir of Bogatzky, lately published in the Lutheran Home Journal, it is said, with truth, "Although they may be characterized by the somewhat confined and methodical piety of the pietistic school, the decisiveness and depth of faith, the deep earnestness, ever directing to the one

thing needful, and the wealth of spiritual experience, which everywhere distinguish their contents, evidently drawn from the living fountain of the word of God, give them a lasting value in the eyes of all who are earnestly seeking the salvation of their souls. Consequently, in these days of reviving faith, many, desirous of fostering the spirit of true devotion, will gladly return to them."

The design of the book is, not to gratify an idle curiosity, nor to amuse an empty mind, but to arrest the attention of the thoughtless, to impress the wayward, to awaken and foster the spirit of penitent and confiding prayer, that men may believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, they may have life through his name.

On behalf of the Lutheran Board of Publication.

C. W. SCHAEFFER, *Editor*

GERMANTOWN, PA., Nov 10, 1858.

NOTE

The Lutheran Board of Publication is mainly indebted, for the publication of this invaluable little Manual, to the following persons, members of St. James's Ev. Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, Pa..—they having paid to the undersigned the following sums, viz.: Messrs. George Shryock, $50, Andrew Polley, $50, Samuel Weaver, $25, Conrad Snyder, $25, Mrs. Mary Reeside, member of St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, $100,—making a sum-total of $250.00.

May the blessing of God attend their beneficent gifts, that thereby good may be done in the world when they are resting in their graves!

BENJAMIN KELLER,
General Agent of the Lutheran Board of Publication

GOLDEN TREASURY.

JANUARY.

JANUARY 1.—*And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breast-plate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy-place, for a memorial before the Lord continually; and thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim.* Ex. xxviii. 29, 30.

TRULY I can say that I too have, through grace, a memorial before the Lord; for thou my Advocate bearest my name upon thy heart in the presence of the Father. Does my sin distress me? Thy intercession shall secure the pardon of my sin, and obtain every blessing for my soul; for God will grant whatsoever thou askest of him. To me shall be shown that mercy that endureth forever, for thou ever livest to make intercession for me; and thy intercession, presented without ceasing on my behalf, takes up and lays before the mercy-seat even the supplications that I offer now. Oh, how it refreshes my faith to say,—

Where high the heavenly temple stands,
The house of God, not made with hands,
A great High-Priest our nature wears,
The Guardian of our souls appears.

Raise, raise, my soul, thy raptured sight,
With sacred wonder and delight;
At God's right hand thy Saviour see,
Enter'd within the veil for thee.

With filial boldness, at the throne
Make all thy cares and sorrows known,
And ask the aids of heavenly power
To help thee in the evil hour.

JAN. 2.—*I will ransom them from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from death; O Death, I will be thy plague! O Grave, I will be thy destruction!* Hosea xiii. 14. *Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them.* Col. ii. 15.

THE world is afraid of a hidden poison where there is none. The real hidden poison is sin, which the Lord grant me to fear everywhere; for it has infected all things and all places. But, O my dear Saviour, thou being my all-sufficient Preservative and Antidote in all places, dwell in me continually, and increase thou my faith, that I may know thee and enjoy

thee more and more. Take away all slavish fear of death and hell from my soul; for thou hast conquered both for me.

Let reason vainly boast her power
To teach her children how to die:
The sinner, in a dying hour,
Needs more than reason can supply:
A view of Christ, the sinner's Friend,
Alone can cheer him in the end.

When nature sinks beneath disease,
And every earthly hope is fled,
What then can give the sinner ease
And fill with peace his dying bed?
Jesus, thy word his heart can cheer;
He's blest e'en then if thou art near.

The gospel free salvation brings,
And Jesus is the gospel theme:
In death the pardon'd sinner sings,
And triumphs in the Saviour's name,
"O death, where is thy sting?" they cry:
"O grave, where is thy victory?"

JAN. 3.—*But now, O Lord, thou art our Father. We are the clay, and thou our Potter; and we are all the work of thy hand.* Isa. lxiv. 8.

BEING only clay in thy hands, O Lord, as I must not, so I would not, by any means, oppose thine operations. This is my desire, that

thou wouldst prepare and perfect me for a meet vessel of grace, in spite of a thousand hinderances. No work of thine ever comes short of its intended perfection; for who can stay thy hand? It is thine own saying:—"I will work, and who shall let it?" Isa. xliii. 13.

An artist delights in his own workmanship, and would not, designedly, leave in it a single flaw or defect. (Phil. i. 6.) Look upon me, thou wise Creator; see how flesh and blood disorder my poor soul; and deliver me from all that may endanger my spiritual life. Knowing that thou canst do no less than a human artist, who is ever ready, and exerts his skill, to mend and perfect his work, I trust that thou wilt not always suffer these impediments to hinder and disgrace thy work. Nay, such are thy wisdom and power, that out of darkness thou canst bring light; out of sickness, health; and, though I am now destitute of strength and life, yet I believe thy work will be finished at last, and glorify the name of its Maker. (1 Pet. v. 10.)

But ah! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to thy sway:
Else the next cloud that veils my skies
Drives all these thoughts away.

JAN. 4.—*Oh that the Salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord brings back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.* Psalm xiv. 7.—[Divine answer!] *If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* John viii. 36. See also 31, 32.

NOT that sin is utterly destroyed, or entirely dead, and cannot stir any more, in the heart of believers; for the Scripture speaks of them as having still to contend against the lusts of the flesh. (Gal. v. 17.) But it is true, that sin has no power either to condemn, or to reign over us; nay, it shall be weakened more and more. (Rom. vi. 12, 14.) So that Christ reigns even in the heart where sin, though hated, still finds a place; he reigns in the midst of his enemies; encouraging the believer to fight perseveringly beneath his banners, till he become more than conqueror, and be presented, without fault, before the throne of God.

Oh, from the world's vile slavery,
Almighty Saviour, set me free,
And as my treasure is above,
Be there my thoughts, be there my love.

But oft, alas! too well I know,
My thoughts, my love, are fix'd below;
In every lifeless prayer I find
The heart unmoved, the absent mind.

Lord, draw my best affections hence,
Above this world of sin and sense;
Cause them to soar beyond the skies.
And rest not till to Thee they rise.

JAN 5.—*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* 2 Tim. iii. 12. *The world hath hated them because they were not of the world.* John xvii. 14.

THE children of God do not love and please the world, and are often greatly afflicted on account of abounding wickedness, and particularly the profanation of the Lord's name. Therefore, if you love the world, and the world love you, there must be much worldliness in you; for the world loves its own.

Many pretend to be Christians, but they will not endure persecution. Instead of this, they blame others for too much rashness, and not acting prudently enough, to avoid the mockings and hatred of the world. Therefore they propose to take wiser measures; and, in order to do more good, take great care not to be despised and rejected. But under this pretence of wisdom and prudence very often lie concealed a dangerous love of the world, and fear of man. Be thou nobler-minded; live as a

Christian indeed, and be not ashamed to bear the cross of Christ. "The disciple is not above his Master." Was it not the lot of Him who is eternal Love, Wisdom, and Power, to endure the contradiction and reproach of sinners? Thou wouldst be wiser than he, indeed, if thou couldst escape the scorn and hatred of the world.

May but his grace my soul renew,
Let sinners gaze, and hate me too;
The Word that saves me doth engage
A sure defence from all their rage.

JAN. 6.—*All things are possible to him that believeth.* Mark ix. 28.

FAITH is the principal thing in the Christian religion. It is the spiritual eye, enlightening the mind, directing the feet, and cheering the heart: the whole turns upon it. As our faith is, so are our strength and fruitfulness in good works. At the same time, there is nothing more difficult to be maintained than faith, even after the work of grace has been actually wrought in our hearts. Therefore, nothing is more needful than to pray for faith as long as

we live. May the Lord give and increase it continually!

Nothing can be stronger in the universe than the hand of faith. By this we lay sure hold on our most glorious and almighty Lord in heaven; and such an inviolable union is thus established between Christ and a believing soul, that none can separate the one from the other; all the powers of hell and sin avail nothing against it. Faith breaks through the greatest obstacles, removes mountains of difficulties, and possesses, as it were, a kind of omnipotence. "For this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John v. 4.) Nay, it even wrestles with God, and prevails. (Gen. xxxii. 28.) As straw cannot withstand the force of fire, so, God being a wall of fire around his people, the greatest power of our mighty enemies shall be consumed like the stubble. Look upon him steadfastly, my soul, and believe in him with a simple heart. Wondrous are his ways with his people, and past finding out; but at last all their sorrows and strife, by the management of his infinite wisdom, must come to a glorious and triumphant end.

JAN. 7.— *Christ is all and in all,* [*and that, too, even in the weakest.*] Col. iii. 11.

To receive Christ as his all, that is the life of the believer; and there he finds strength to give up every thing else. It is good for us to speak often and much of Christ, if we can do it from the heart. We speak indeed of God the Father with cheerful confidence; but all depends upon Christ. He and the Father are one. Lord, art thou mine, what else do I require? Oh, always assure me that thou art mine, and, in whatever state I am, I shall be therewith content!

Now I will not turn from thee;
Still my joy in Christ shall be:
Help me, make me strong and bold,
Firm and fast thy grace to hold.
This world and her lusts I leave,
Only to my Lord I cleave;
All their promises are lies,
But who follows thee is wise.

Let us follow in such sort,
Christlike every deed and thought,
That thy love most true and kind
Henceforth all our hearts may bind;
None may look behind him now,
Who to Christ hath pledged his vow;
Christ doth lead; no longer stand:
Follow me, is His command.

JAN. 8.—*And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him.* Col. iii. 17. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* 1 Cor. x. 31.

WE should receive this word of exhortation at all times, and be mindful of it also even when we partake of our daily food. We find a solemn warning in the report given of the conduct of idolatrous Israel:—"The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." (Ex. xxxii. 6; 1 Cor. x. 7.) It is indeed to be lamented that, in our times of abounding light and of gracious privileges, some, even, who ought to be teachers of others and examples to the flock, do not seem to have God in their thoughts, and appear, in the spirit of the world, to lose sight of the divine glory. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold.

O God, I long thy light to see
My God, I hourly think on thee;
Oh, draw me up, nor hide thy face,
But help me from thy holy place.

Help me to love the world no more;
Be master of my house and store;
The shield of faith around me throw,
And break the arrows of my foe.

Fain would my heart henceforward be
Fix'd, O my God, alone on thee;
That heart and soul, by thee possess'd,
May find in thee their perfect rest.

JAN. 9.—*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing.* John vi. 37, 39.

MY Lord and Saviour, I too am amongst them whom the Father hath given thee; for I have come to thee. So thou wilt not let me perish, nor cast me out. Thou hast come to save, not to condemn and to cast out, not even thine enemies, for whom thou didst die, though they reject thee: how much less wilt thou cast out thy believing ones, weak and feeble though they be!

Hark! 'tis the Saviour's voice I hear:
Come, trembling soul, dispel thy fear!
He saith—and who his word can doubt?—
He will in no wise cast you out.

The publican and dying thief
Applied to Christ and found relief;
Nor need you entertain a doubt:
He will in no wise cast you out.

Approach your God; make no delay;
He waits to welcome you to-day:
His mercy try, nor longer doubt:
He will in no wise cast you out.

JAN. 10.—*Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.* Ps. cl. 6.

HYPOCRITES affect to be thankful in times of prosperity; but Christians bless the Lord also in seasons of adversity. When they are bowed down under the weight of their trials, then they begin to learn how utterly unworthy they are of the least of all his goodness and his truth. Then the smallest blessing draws forth the voice of praise. There is much instruction for the believer in the words of Baruch ii. 18:—"The soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, will give thee praise and righteousness, O Lord!"

Yes, Lord, through all my changing days,
With each new scene afresh I mark
How wondrously thou guid'st my ways
Where all seems troubled, wilder'd, dark:
When dangers thicken fast and hopes depart,
Thy light beams comfort on my sinking heart.

Shall I not, then, be fill'd with joy,
Shall I not praise thee evermore?
Triumphant songs my lips employ,
E'en when my cup of woe runs o'er?
Nay, though the heavens should vanish as a scroll
Nothing shall shake or daunt my trusting soul.

JAN. 11.—*God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned.* John iii. 16, 18.

OH that these truly precious words were ever warmly impressed on our hearts! that they were our last thoughts at night, and the first at our waking in the morning! and that they were improved in such a manner as to make our dying-bed easy in the evening of our life, and insure our rising with gladness in the morning of the resurrection! What more blessed and delightful meditations can I daily dwell upon, than to think thus?—God has loved me, even me, when I was his enemy, and so loved me that he gave me his only Son! Bless me with faith in Christ; then Christ is mine, and all things are mine. (1

Cor. iii. 21.) For, since he has not spared his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things! (Rom. viii. 32.) He will never suffer a believing soul to perish: he has passed his word for it. He has told me that I shall not perish, I shall not be condemned, but have everlasting life, if I believe. This will I build and depend upon, to my last moments, as upon an immovable rock. Amen and Amen!

Oh, for this love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak!

JAN. 12.—*In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.* Col. i. 14, ii. 14.

THEREFORE he says, "It is finished." (John xix. 30.) The daily sins of believers, says Dr. Spener, in his "Consolations of Faith," are already forgiven for Jesus' sake, because they are truly included in the act of justification; for in this act Christ, with all the fulness of his merits,

is imputed to us. Now, the merits and righteousness of Christ cover not only the sins that are past, but also the present and those that are to come. As long as we remain steadfast in the faith, we are justified every day. See how perfect should be our confidence towards God, and how full our assurance of faith!

Hence from my soul, sad thoughts, begone,
And leave me to my joys;
My tongue shall triumph in my God,
And make a joyful noise.

Oh, what immortal joys I feel,
And raptures all divine,
When Jesus tells me I am his,
And my Beloved mine!

In vain the tempter frights my soul,
And breaks my peace in vain:
One glimpse, dear Saviour, of thy face
Revives my joys again.

JAN. 13.—*Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings.* Ps. xvii. 8. *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.* Ps. xci. 4.

No one, O Lord, has more need continually to keep close to thee in prayer and faith, and

at the same time no one is more unable to do it, than I, the least of all thy flock. Oh that thou wouldest be graciously pleased to incline and enable me to pursue this blessed work, and grant that thy good Spirit, according to his own pleasure, may never suffer me to be faint and backward in the same! While I truly rest my faith under the wings of thy grace, I am sure of defence, power, and comfort; but, as soon as I wander from thee, I am in danger of losing the comfortable sense of these privileges and falling into various errors and perplexities. Guide me, O Lord, by thy counsel in this world, and at last receive me into glory. Amen.

He that has made his refuge God
Shall find a most secure abode,—
Shall walk all day beneath his shade,
And there at night shall rest his head.

Just as a hen protects her brood,
From birds of prey that seek their blood,
Under her feathers, so the Lord
Makes his own arm his people's guard.

Thrice happy man! thy Maker's care
Shall keep thee from the fowler's snare,—
Satan the fowler, who betrays
Unguarded souls a thousand ways.

What though a thousand at thy side,
At thy right hand ten thousand died?
Thy God his chosen people saves
Among the dead, amidst the graves

JAN. 14.—*Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* 2 Kings xx. 1; Ps. xc. 12.

HE who is free from gross offences, yet who does not deny the world, but lives on good terms with it, is by many regarded as wise and upright, as walking in the right way, keeping within proper limits, and having no fellowship with sin. But these are the notions of folly, and they cannot stand the test of a dying hour. What profit can the departing soul find in the recollection of the hours it has devoted to giddy pleasures, to vain conversation, to trifling amusement?

Would the world my steps entice
To yon wide and level road,
Fill'd with mirth and pleasant vice?
Lord, I think upon the load
Thou didst once for me endure,
And I fly all thoughts impure;

Thinking on thy bitter pains,
Hush'd in prayer my heart remains.

Fount of Good, within me dwell;
For the peace thy presence sheds
Keeps us safe in conflict fell,
Charms the pain from dying beds.
Hide me safe within thine arm,
Where no foe can hurt nor harm:
Whoso, Lord, in thee doth rest,
He hath conquer'd, he is blest.

JAN. 15.—*Pray without ceasing.* 1 Thess. v. 17.

IF we have not yet grace enough, it is because we do not pray enough. For, most true it is, we need not strive to move God to compassion, and extort, as it were, by our prayers, the blessings which he has promised. Very far from it. He is every minute communicating himself to us; in every word he holds forth Christ and every good thing to us. But we must always have a soul hungering after Christ, and by incessant prayer stretch out the hand of faith to receive him. This is chiefly to be understood of the inward desires and groanings of our spirit; but we must not omit to pour out our supplications, daily, as often as we can,

by words; else our secret mental prayers, at last, may become so secret as to cease entirely.

Holy Father, lend an ear,
While I sue in Jesus' name;
Surely thou wilt kindly hear,
Since I bring no human claim:
Let me for adoption stay,
Only give me power to pray.

Grant me comfort, or deny;
Visit, or from me depart;
Only let thy Spirit cry
Abba, Father, in my heart.
Abba, Father, would I say:
Only give me power to pray.

JAN. 16.—*Abide in me.* John xv. 4. *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* John vi. 68. *It is good for me to draw near to God I have put my trust in the Lord God.* Ps. lxxiii. 28.

To abide in Christ, who is our Righteousness and Strength, and not to be moved from him, is the very life and power of Christianity. We are in this happy state when our thoughts are going out after him, our hearts cleaving to him, and our minds staying upon him. To know Christ, and thus to abide in him, as our

righteousness, brings peace and joy: this joy in the Lord is certainly followed with strength to overcome sin and the world, which believers renounce the more readily as they have found something better in Christ. May the Lord give me grace, likewise, immovably to abide in him!

Oh, draw me, Saviour, after thee;
So shall I run and never tire:
With gracious words still comfort me;
Be thou my hope, my sole desire:
Free me from every weight; nor fear
Nor sin can come, if thou art here.

What in thy love possess I not?
My star by night, my sun by day,
My spring of life, when parch'd by drought,
My wine to cheer, my bread to stay,
My strength, my shield, my safe abode,
My robe before the throne of God.

In suffering be thy love my peace,
In weakness be thy love my power;
And when the storms of life shall cease,
Jesus, in that important hour,
In death as life be thou my guide,
And save me, who for me hast died.

JAN. 17.—*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.* Gal. iii. 13, 14.

THE spirit of sanctification is the gift of Christ. Therefore we should not pretend to follow after holiness in our own strength. We must first rest wholly upon Christ, and abide in him as our propitiation, our righteousness and peace; and as he is made of God unto us righteousness, so will he also become our sanctification. The kingdom, the work, and the image of God will go on best when thus, relying wholly upon Christ, we trust least to our own strength. When Christ, who gave himself for us, lives and works in us, and we live in him, in childlike sincerity, then the yoke is easy and the burden light; and the law condemns us no more.

The law commands and makes us know
What duty to our God we owe;
But 'tis the gospel must reveal
Where lies the strength to do his will.

The law discovers guilt and sin,
And shows how vile our hearts have been;

Only the gospel can express
Forgiving love and cleansing grace.

My soul, no more attempt to draw
Thy life and comfort from the law:
Fly to the hope the gospel gives:
The man that trusts the promise lives.

JAN. 18.—*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* Rom. x. 4.

WHEN we come to understand the spirituality of the law, we find that it condemns us, with all our works and ways: it reveals to us our helplessness; it brings us down very low; and when it has done this it has finished its work. It can go no further than only direct us to Christ in the gospel; and if we are in him, then the law can make no more demands upon us. The righteousness that we have in him is far more complete than that which the law requires. It is the righteousness of Christ; and that is more than Adam's.

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

When from the dust of death I rise,
To take my mansion in the skies,
Even then shall this be all my plea:—
"Jesus hath lived and died for me."

Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully through thee absolved I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

This spotless robe the same appears
When ruin'd nature sinks in years:
No age can change its glorious hue:
The robe of Christ is ever new.

And when the dead shall hear thy voice,
Thy banish'd children shall rejoice;
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,—
Jesus, the Lord our righteousness!

JAN. 19.—*But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto Noah, into the ark. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her to him into the ark.* Gen. viii. 9.

THE dove-like Spirit communicated to the soul in regeneration can find no rest for the sole of its foot until it brings us to Jesus, who is the true Ark of the Covenant. Many, on their first awakening from sin, apply themselves

to very hard works and rigorous duties, thereby expecting to find rest for their wounded consciences. But, though the right and diligent use of all the means of grace is absolutely required, great care must be taken not to quiet ourselves by that only. We should not place any confidence at all in our own doings, but look for rest only through the blood of Christ. To be found in him, justified and accepted, would soon fill our hearts with peace, nay, prompt, encourage, and enable us to abound in every good work.

The dove let loose in Eastern skies,
  Returning fondly home,
Ne'er stoops to earth her wing, nor flies
  Where idler warblers roam;

But high she shoots, through air and light,
  Above all low delay,
Where nothing earthly bounds her flight
  Nor shadow dims her way.

So grant me, Lord, from every stain
  Of sinful passion free,
Aloft through virtue's purer air
  To steer my course to thee!

JAN. 20.—*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* John xiii. 35. *Forbearing one another in love. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; but be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.* Eph. iv. 2, 3, 26, 32.

HUMBLE Christians never affect singularity nor set up extraordinary claims: they rather study to be of one mind, and strive not about words or places of distinction, lest the general harmony subsisting among them, and the edification of souls, should be hindered. Whoever judges and blames every thing, and can never agree or join in devotion with other experienced Christians, is puffed up with self-conceit, and is in the way to make a dangerous shipwreck; "for pride comes before a fall."

Not different food and different dress
Compose the kingdom of our Lord,
But peace, and joy, and righteousness,
Faith, and obedience to his word.

When weaker Christians we despise,
We do the gospel mighty wrong;
For God, the gracious and the wise,
Receives the feeble with the strong.

Let pride and wrath be banish'd hence,
Meekness and love our souls pursue;
Nor shall our practice give offence
To saints,—the Gentile, or the Jew.

JAN. 21.—*While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept.* Matt. xxv. 5.

OH that I may be roused out of my slumber and be watchful and ready against the coming of my Bridegroom! How many are there that set out in good earnest in their way to heaven, and run well for some time, but at last are lulled to rest and entangled again with a false notion of liberty! Even the wise virgins fall asleep. Let this be a warning to me, O Lord! Set thou a guard before my eyes, ears, and other faculties, lest the world should again enter through these avenues of the heart. If the spark be not speedily extinguished, it will soon break out into a flame; thus sin is of a progressive nature, and its venom spreads quickly and very wide unless it be stopped and opposed in time. Watch, therefore, over this unsteady heart of mine, O thou Keeper of Israel! that as soon as it begins to wander from thee I may be alarmed,

and may flee from sin as from a serpent. Give me grace to look upon every hour as my last, so that, being ever wisely upon my guard, I may meet thee with joy when my time is run out, whenever it shall please thee to call me hence.

The fearful soul, that tires and faints
And walks the ways of God no more,
Is but esteem'd almost a saint,
And makes his own destruction sure.

Lord, let not all my hopes be vain;
Create my heart entirely new,—
Which hypocrites could ne'er attain,
Which false apostates never knew.

JAN. 22.—*But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.* Matt. xiii. 25.

No wonder that Christians lose their power and strength if the enemy of souls find them asleep. How soon may he gain an advantage from without if a strict guard be not kept within! Though Satan seems to sleep sometimes, and we should appear to be in no great danger, it is only his stratagem to make us careless. He never fails to be vigilant and

watch his opportunity, that he may offer us battle with advantage; and who knows but he may gain the victory by those very sins to which we for many years had hardly any temptation? How cunningly does he work! how enticing is the world! Even in lawful things, very often, the most dangerous snares lie hidden. A single word that we hear may be able to disturb our peace. One unguarded look is sometimes enough to infatuate our hearts. There is danger on all sides. Unless the Lord open our eyes and preserve us on all occasions, each of us, even the best, may still be overcome, and fatally hurt, by sin and the world. Satan is particularly intent upon beguiling the godly; and, having caught them in his net, he triumphs exceedingly over them. O Lord, suffer me never to sink into spiritual slumbers again!

Whene'er my careless hands hang down,
Oh, let me see thy gathering frown
And feel thy warning eye,
And starting, cry, from ruin's brink,
"Save, Jesus, or I yield! I sink!
Oh, save me, or I die!"

JAN. 23.—*Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.* Heb. ii. 17. *But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* Heb. vii. 24, 25.

LUTHER says, "If your heart can truly testify 'Christ Jesus is your brother,' the blessing will be so great in your eyes that you will much prefer to gaze upon it in silent admiration, rather than to be always loudly boasting of it in the hearing of others. They who beset us only with the noisy profession, 'Christ is my brother,' have not the right spirit." Christ is truly the propitiation for the sins of the whole world: therefore he is the propitiation for my sins also. Is any thing laid to my charge? His intercession saves to the uttermost. He is able to save to the uttermost, and he ever loveth to make intercession. His help, therefore, can never fail,—never; and through him my salvation shall be abundant and complete.

Jesus my Redeemer lives,
And his life I once shall see:
Bright the hope this promise gives;
Where he is, I too shall be.
Shall I fear, then? can the Head
Rise and leave the members dead?

JAN. 24.—*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. We love him because he first loved us.* 1 John iv. 10, 19. *He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. We will come unto him and make our abode with him.* John xiv. 21, 23.

WHAT a glorious promise! What manner of love is this! Lord, I would not exchange my cross and sufferings, much less thy love, for the love and honours of the world. Only make it more known to me how great thy love is, and how much thou hast forgiven me, that I may love thee much again, and be thereby still better purged from the inordinate love of temporal things. It is mine earnest desire that the gates of my heart should be open to none but thee, that thou alone mayest dwell in me. Shed thy love abroad in my heart; quicken and renew all the faculties of my

mind and body; and work every thing in and for me.

Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,
We wretched sinners lay,
Without one cheerful beam of hope
Or spark of glimmering day.

With pitying eyes, the Prince of grace
Behold our helpless grief;
He saw, and—oh, amazing love!—
He ran to our relief.

Angels, assist our mighty joys;
Strike all your harps of gold;
But when you raise your highest notes,
His love can ne'er be told.

JAN. 25.—*Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.* 2 Cor. v. 8.

THIS indeed is the true disposition of a soul espoused to Christ. She has but one care, —which is to please him in all things. And this desire to do his will is, as it were, the ring and seal of her Bridegroom; which she may look upon, even in the absence of all spiritual joy, as a token for good, that she is his spouse.

Ought not, then, each day, O my soul, to witness a new recognition of thy union to

Christ? He is desirous that thou shouldest be betrothed unto him even now, and waits only for thy consent. Hearken, O daughter; consider, and incline thine ear; be no longer married to the world. Forget thine own people and thy father's house, and take him alone for thy husband: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty. Wilt thou give the refusal to this glorious and kind Saviour? I hope not. Give it rather to the world, and resolutely say, It is enough; I have done with thee, O poor world, I break the bonds of my former love: mine eyes and my feet shall henceforth only be directed to the blessed eternal city of the New Jerusalem, where my heavenly Bridegroom resides. And oh, what need have I to be duly prepared, dressed, and beautified against his coming and the time of his taking me home to himself! Lord Jesus, keep me longing for thine appearance.

Oh, may I stand before the Lamb,
When earth and seas are fled,
And hear the Judge pronounce my name,
With blessings on my head.

JAN. 26.—*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* Heb. iv. 16.

OH that we were all so wise as to prepare and provide ourselves in due time with the right armour of faith, before the time of need and hour of death approach! Come, my reader, let us begin now, and go directly to the gate of mercy, lest we should come too late and be undone. Behold the encouragement of Christ:—"I am the Door and the Way." (John x. 9, xiv. 6.) Now, by this door thou mayest find the entrance into the heart and favour of God; Christ himself sitting on a mercy-seat, to receive and welcome the vilest of sinners. And there is no drawing near to God but through him, and clothed in the robes of righteousness of our only Redeemer, Mediator, and Advocate. He is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, nay, the very ALL in ALL, to believers. With Christ they can never part; and he can never part with them.

Of Him who did salvation bring
I would forever think and sing:
Arise, ye guilty! he'll forgive;
Arise, ye poor! he will relieve.

Ask but his grace, and lo! 'tis given:
Ask, and he leads from hell to heaven:
Though sin and sorrow wound my soul,
Jesus, thy balm can make it whole.

Guide thou, O Lord, guide thou my course,
And draw me on with welcome force:
Still make me walk, still make me tend,
By thee my Way, to God my End.

JAN. 27.—*God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* Rom. v. 8, 9, 10.

HERE I have much more reason to cry out than Moses, (Deut. xxxiii. 3,) "The Lord loveth the people." But I beseech thee, too, O Lord, let this infinite gift of thy Son appear to me greater and greater every day; let thy love, shining out in his redemption, go on so to increase in my soul as to disperse all clouds of darkness, unbelief, and hard thoughts of thy goodness. Whenever a slanderous spirit tries to lift up his head, grant that my faith and love may be quickened and strengthened in

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such a manner as heartily to praise thy great love, in spite of all his suggestions. This is the chief desire which I offer unto thee in all my prayers, night and day. The want of faith and love, I am sensible, is still my greatest want. My soul is like a large empty vessel; but I pray thee to fill it speedily, and lay not my sins to my charge.

Come, guilty souls, and flee away,
Like doves, to Jesus' wounds:
This is the welcome gospel day,
Wherein free grace abounds.

God loved the world, and gave his Son
To drink the cup of wrath;
And Jesus says he'll cast out none
That come to him by faith.

JAN. 28.—*For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary, the one to the other.* Gal. v. 17.

WE have no strength for the strife that goes on within us as long as we are under the law, and we can never expect to gain the victory. But when we begin to have faith in Christ, then that strife ceases Then, however, this

other strife between the flesh and the Spirit is just fairly begun; for before faith comes we are without the Spirit, and we receive him only when we begin to believe in the gospel of the Son of God. Then the flesh will often cry out for the indulgence of a little ease; but the Spirit will promptly testify that true peace is to be found only in heaven. The flesh will groan under its burdens and its pains; but the Spirit will respond that we must fight if we would reign. The flesh gives up, exhausted with its weary bondage; the Spirit declares that God offers strength and many a present blessing to the weak, and will make himself their eternal great reward. The flesh trembles as it expects approaching troubles; the Spirit testifies that they shall be only for a moment, and shall work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The flesh complains that it is despised, not sufficiently noticed, by men; the Spirit says, It would be well for you to feel still more of your own unworthiness. The flesh demands, at last, Will you never yield to my wishes nor approve of my plans? and the Spirit replies, We are at variance and can never be reconciled.

So these are contrary the one to the other.

Forever blessed be the Lord,
My Saviour and my shield:
He sends his Spirit by his word,
To arm me for the field.

A Friend and Helper so divine
My fainting hope shall raise;
He makes the glorious victory mine,
And his shall be the praise.

JAN. 29.—*For the turning away of the simple shall slay them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.* Prov. i. 32, 33. *The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.* Ps. xxxiv. 10. *Godliness is profitt able unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* 1 Tim. iv. 8.

SOMETIMES even the rich in this world do lack and suffer because they have not enough; but the believer always has enough, at one time as much as at another. He has the favour of God, that crowns every thing with good; and when it fails him in one form it always descends upon him in another. He has Christ, and Christ is All. If he is ignorant, Christ is his wisdom; if he is weak, Christ is his strength. Whatever may be withheld from

him would certainly not be good for him,—at least for the present. If he should even suffer hunger and want, it will do him good; for it will lead him to the living bread, the word of God; it will deepen the meekness of his heart; it will teach him how to pray.

God, thou art my rock of strength,
And my home is in thine arms:
Thou wilt send me help at length,
And I feel no wild alarms.

When my trials tarry long,
Unto thee I look and wait,
Knowing none, though keen and strong,
Can my trust in thee abate.

Be my All; in all I do,
Let me only seek thy will:
Where the heart to thee is true,
All is peaceful, calm, and still.

JAN. 30.—*All these things have I kept from my youth up.* Matt. xix. 20. *They return, but not to the Most High: they are like a deceitful bow.* Hos. vii. 16.

HE is truly converted who is indeed delivered from his own heart's lust, has cast off his besetting sin, and has been converted to Christ, for whose sake he is willing to suffer the loss

of all things and through whom he can overcome all things. Examine yourself, and be not deceived. If you have been inclined from your very childhood to approve of what is good, if you have been trained under pious influences, if you have accustomed yourself to much that is praiseworthy, or even if every one should speak loudly in your favour, do not suppose that all this is a sufficient evidence of your conversion. By such testimony many a soul has been deceived. Many too, when they only begin to feel the movements of the Holy Ghost upon the heart, delude themselves by cherishing the conviction that they are already perfect and complete. No, no: even after such a beginning you must press on in the assault until you gain the victory: the beginning is not the end. You must strive and struggle unto blood. In such a state, claim not to be converted, and you will not be deceived. Fly away from every refuge of your own working. You shall conquer by watching and by prayer, and you will no longer be satisfied, as you once were, to be only almost a Christian.

I rest upon the ground
Of Jesus and his blood,

For 'tis through him that I have found
The true eternal good.

Naught have I of my own,
Naught in the life I lead:
What Christ hath given me, that alone
Is worth all love indeed.

JAN. 31.—*The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.* Matt. xiii. 45, 46.

THEREFORE lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven; for where your treasure is there will your heart be also. (Matt. vi. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 6–10.) For the love of money is the root of all evil. The word of God gives this account of no other vice. Who contemplates this with becoming seriousness? Roots are often deeply imbedded in the soil. If, instead of searching out these roots with the greatest care and extracting them with the utmost faithfulness, you allow them to remain and flourish within you, your heart will be the abode of all evil. Then only has the covetous man an evidence of his conversion and a proof that Christ is his treasure and his crown when his heart forgets the

love of money, grows full of the love of God, and becomes strong in the dictates and the works of benevolence towards his fellow-men. O Lord, enable me through grace to root out and cast off my besetting sin.

Oh that we our hearts might sever
From earth's tempting vanities,
Fixing them on Him forever
In whom all our fulness lies!

Oh that we might Him discover
Whom with longing love we've sought,
Join ourselves to him forever!
For without him all is naught.

FEBRUARY.

FEBRUARY 1.—*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.

IF your heart truly testifies that you are a great sinner, yea, the chief of sinners, then you ought to rely upon it that for Christ's sake you are justified and shall be saved. It was to save sinners—to save even the chief of them, without exception—that the great Redeemer came. Whoever believes this does not think lightly of any sin. In whatever form sin may approach or affect him, he turns straightway towards the blood of Christ: that humbles him, and yet secures for him a child-like confidence and boldness, through Christ, in drawing near to God.

Oh, write this saying in your heart,
Ye sad at heart, with whom
Sorrows fall thick, and joys depart,
And darker grows your gloom.

Despair not, for your help is near:
He standeth at the door
Who best can comfort you and cheer;
He comes, nor stayeth more.

Ye shall not shrink nor turn aside,
Fearing to see his face,
So deep your sins, for he will hide
The darkest with his grace.

He comes, he comes, to save from sin,
All sinners to release,
For all the sons of God to win
The heritage of peace.

Feb. 2.—*This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* 1 John iii. 21. *God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* 1 John iv. 9.

The Father breaks forth, as it were, through the whole Scripture, in high praise of his Son. He calls out from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him." (Matt. xvii. 5.) Nothing, therefore, can be more agreeable to him than for us to receive this his Son and to believe his report. (John xvi. 27.) On doing this, we shall have life; but by omitting it, we treat him as a liar. Unbelief,

therefore, which refuses to accept of this great gift, is, no doubt, the greatest of all sins. O Lord, teach me this, and grant me faith.

Why art thou so backward, O my soul, to believe, like the rest of God's children, in Christ? Hast thou not as good a right to it as they have? Who can dispute with thee this privilege? It is the express will of the Father: nay, he even commands thee to do it. Has he given his only Son, by an act of inconceivable love, to die for thee, to the very end that thou shouldst live? Oh, what a pleasing thing will it be to him to put thy whole trust upon this his well-beloved Son! This would be the joy of his heart more than any thing else. Therefore delay no longer to receive what his love has offered thee, but firmly believe that the Father loveth thee, as well as the Son.

Author of faith, to thee I lift
My weary, longing eyes:
Oh, let me now receive that gift:
My soul without it dies.

FEB. 3.—*Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* Rev. v. 12.

O LORD, what mean and slight notions have I of thy great power! By these I am discouraged, and thou art robbed of thy praise. Grant, therefore, that, though I would always be duly abased and convinced of my vileness in such a manner as never to ascribe any good to myself, or think myself worthy of the least thing, (for at the best I am but an unprofitable servant,) yet thy grace and power may at the same time appear to me abundantly greater than all my sins, so that I may have always encouragement enough to believe in and praise thy holy name.

Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne:
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.

"Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry,
"To be exalted thus;"
"Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply;
'For he was slain for us."

Let all that dwell above the sky,
And air, and earth, and seas,
Conspire to lift thy glories high
And speak thine endless praise.

The whole creation join in one
To bless the sacred name
Of Him that sits upon the throne,
And to adore the Lamb.

FEB. 4.—*My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.* Ps. lxiii. 5. *Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come.* Rev. xix. 6, 7.

WHAT tends not to thy glory, O Lord, and is not thy own work, (whatever appearance it may have,) is not really good and profitable. Preserve and assist me, therefore, to do all things as of thee, in thy sight and to thy honour. May my soul be ever magnifying thy name, O my dear Redeemer and Bridegroom, and my whole conversation be directed to thy praise! Grant that my heart and mouth may be ever full of thy great mercies and overflow continually with thanksgiving.

My God, my King, thy various praise
Shall fill the remnant of my days,
Thy grace employ my humble tongue
Till death and glory raise the song.

The wings of every hour shall bear
Some grateful tribute to thine ear;
And every setting sun shall see
New works of duty done to thee.

Thy truth and justice I'll proclaim;
Thy bounty flows an endless stream;
Thy mercy swift, thine anger slow,
But dreadful to the stubborn foe.

But who can speak thy wondrous deeds?
Thy greatness all our thoughts exceeds;
Vast and unsearchable thy ways,
Vast and immortal be thy praise.

Feb. 5.—*Forsake not the works of thine own hands.* Ps. cxxxviii. 8. *He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.* Phil. i. 6.

The right way to grow in grace is to give up thyself wholly to thy heavenly Father, who knoweth all thy wants and hath engaged to supply them. Then labour diligently to walk with Christ, and carefully cherish the new life, which, be it ever so weak and little now, in comparison with the old man, will increase, and gradually outgrow him, as a new skin does the old. May the Lord only give us grace to watch against the opposite extreme, so as never to be

lulled into a false rest or a lukewarm spirit, but to be ever diligently and seriously employed in crucifying the flesh and using all the means of grace! then we need not be troubled as though there were danger lest the work of God should not continue and advance within us

My soul lies cleaving to the dust:
Lord, give me life divine:
From vain desires and every lust
Turn off these eyes of mine.

I need the influence of thy grace
To speed me in thy way,
Lest I should loiter in my race
Or turn my feet astray.

Are not thy mercies sovereign still,
And thou a faithful God?
Wilt thou not grant me warmer zeal
To run the heavenly road?

FEB. 6.—*The fashion of this world passeth away.* 1 Cor. vii. 31.

As long as we feed on the husks of the world, and are in love with it, we are neither willing nor able to taste the comforts of the love of God. But when sin and the world are become an abomination to us, and we desire to

be rid of them, and seek diligently unto Jesus Christ for the help of his grace and the benefit of his blood, we are then in a right way to receive the love of God and every blessing of salvation. And though we are chastened by the Lord, yet he is not angry with us, but does it to embitter sin and the world more and more to us, and to make us loathe them, that we may not be condemned with the world.

Let worldly minds the world pursue:
It has no charms for me:
Once I admired its trifles too
But grace has set me free.

Its pleasures now no longer please,
No more content afford;
Far from my heart be joys like these,
Now I have known the Lord.

As by the light of opening day
The stars are all conceal'd,
So earthly pleasures fade away,
When Jesus is reveal'd.

Now, Lord, I would be thine alone
And wholly live to thee;
But may I hope that thou wilt own
A worthless worm like me?

Yes! though of sinners I'm the worst
I cannot doubt thy will;
For if thou hadst not loved me first
I had refused thee still.

FEB. 7.—*Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.* Matt. vi. 13. *They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power.* Rev. iv. 10, 11.

ONE that is really poor in spirit, though he has practised the duties of the Christian life ever so long and ever so diligently, always thinks himself to have received but a very little portion of Christ, and the work of sanctification hardly to be begun in his soul. So far is he from believing he has already attained it, that, after all his best actions, he counts himself not worthy to be called by the name of a grateful son: he is never pleased with himself. No degree of holiness will satisfy his soul. He seeks and finds no rest or comfort but in the infinite mercy of God and in the pardon of his sins by faith: at the same time, he does not divide Christ, but he receives him in all his offices, and gives himself entirely up to him without reserve, to be more and more sanctified and perfected. In this state he is safe indeed: he is prepared for death, and has no reason to be anxiously afraid, though earnestly desirous of higher degrees of sanctification.

The kingdom is thine we proclaim;
Thy power prevails over men:
The glory is due to thy name,
Forever and ever. Amen.

FEB 8.—*Hallowed be thy name.* Matt. vi. 9. *He must increase, but I must decrease.* John iii. 30. *Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* John xvii. 11, 17, 19.

WE should not only pray for ourselves, but also with our whole hearts make prayer and supplication for all the interests of the kingdom of God. If we fail to do this, our natural selfishness will always prevail over us: we shall be ever seeking only our personal welfare; we shall appear to be building up only a kind of divine kingdom of our own, which shall surely come to naught at last. This is a very different spirit from the true communion of saints, who, though scattered abroad over all the earth, are yet one in the Lord.

O Lord, let my chief delight be only in the glory of thy name, by whomsoever that glory may be promoted, and though it may require

much personal sacrifice on my part. Let me be nothing in my own eyes; let me decrease, but do thou increase; and, whatever thy grace may enable me to do, not unto me, not unto me, but unto thy name, be the glory, for thy mercy and thy truth's sake.

Great High-Priest, who deign'dst to be
Once the sacrifice for me,
Take this living heart of mine;
Lay it on thy holy shrine.

Slay in me the wayward will;
Earthly sense and passion kill;
Tear self-love from out my heart,
Though it cost me bitter smart.

So may God the Righteous brook
On my sacrifice to look,
In whose sight no gift has worth
Save a Christ-like life on earth.

Feb 9.—*Thy kingdom come.* Matt. vi. 10. *For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.* Luke xvii. 21. *For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power: it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* 1 Cor. iv. 20; Rom. xiv. 17.

Many persons deceive themselves by a false, a mistaken faith, relying upon their outward

honesty and their good works; for, with all this, the heart, unchanged, still fixes its affections upon the gold and the lusts of earth, and upon the honour that man can bestow. Where shall we find that power of the Lord Jesus which is able to overcome the seductions of the very things upon which the heart most fondly hangs? O Lord, help us, that we thy people may not turn again to vanity. Many a one is ensnared after he has had the experience of years. O Lord, save me!

There are those who can freely speak the language of Canaan, but, when they are required to deny themselves, they will not practise what they speak. Such are only babblers. Their religion is in word and in speculation alone. They have the form, but are without the power, of godliness.

Thy kingdom, Lord, establish in my heart,
That I in righteousness may fruitful be,
And to thy name, whate'er grace may impart,
To thee alone, shall all the glory be.

FEB. 10.—*Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.* Matt. vi. 10. *The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* 2 Peter iii. 9. *Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

How precious and free are the treasures of grace! O my soul, depend upon this grace alone, and trust that Jesus, according to his own good pleasure, will save you to the uttermost. Whenever an unbelieving thought intrudes into your heart, dismiss it as a most mischievous device of the devil; for unbelief is the fruitful seed of all sin; and it is by faith especially that we overcome the Wicked One. What though I be sinful and vile? I am not so deeply degraded that God should be unwilling or unable to help me; for I belong to the family of man, and in his gracious will I find my help, my sanctification, my redemption. It is his good pleasure to save me: this is also the desire of my soul; and what enemy can prevent it or do me harm?

If God be on my side,
Then let who will oppose.

For oft ere now to him I cried,
And he hath quell'd my foes.

If Jesus be my friend,
If God doth love me well,
What matters all my foes intend,
Though strong they be and fell?

Feb. 11.—*Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.* Ps. xcvii. 11. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness: he is gracious, full of compassion, and righteous.* Ps. cxii. 4. *Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise; for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb. x. 35–37.

This shows that believers are subject to many changes of joy and sorrow. In a state of gladness, therefore, we have reason to fear, and in the hours of trouble and sadness to entertain good hopes. Thus we shall be able to keep the happy medium between the extremes of levity and despair. Before a man has a true sense of his own miseries, the complaints and infirmities of the saints are often a stumbling-block; but afterwards they will administer

to him great comfort. This is the reason that God has revealed them in Scripture; for the complaints of his children give more comfort than all their most heroic actions.

Now let the Lord my Saviour smile,
And show my name upon his heart
I would forget my pains a while,
And in the pleasure lose the smart.

But oh! it swells my sorrows high
To see my blessed Jesus frown:
My spirits sink, my comforts die,
And all the springs of life are down.

Yet why, my soul, why these complaints?
Still while he frowns his bowels move:
Still on his heart he bears his saints,
And feels their sorrows and his love.

FEB. 12.—*For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* Heb. ii. 18. *For we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* Heb. iv. 15.

To have Christ as a High-Priest and Saviour means to believe in him even though our faith be weak and timid. The joyful assurance and

experience of his presence in the heart is the portion of those who are sealed with the Holy Ghost, whose faith has accordingly waxed stronger. Although this joyful assurance is not always felt by those who are weak in faith and who are severely tried, yet the Lord regards them as his own: he loves them, and is patient towards their infirmities.

O my soul, art thou cast down? still do not despair. Thine Elder Brother is touched with a feeling of thine infirmities. His heart is tender in sympathy and plenteous in grace. Draw near to him, then, with boldness, and thou shalt find grace and mercy to help thee in time of need.

I will not let thee go, my God, my Life, my Lord!
Not Death can tear
Me from His care
Who for my sake his soul in death outpour'd.
Thou diedst for love to me:
I say, in love to thee,
"I will not let thee go."

FEB. 13.—*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him* 2 Cor. v. 19, 21.

IT highly concerns believers, who desire to keep a constant peace in their bosoms, to be ever sensible of their spiritual poverty, and to feed and rest wholly on the all-sufficient atonement and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Disquiet of mind, and spiritual slothfulness, often proceed from self-righteousness, and not looking to Christ for every thing, but trusting secretly to something in ourselves. Let me not presume to indulge the vain hope of first working out a righteousness for myself. No: thou, Lord, alone art my Righteousness. Thou hast turned away the curse; thy blood cleanseth from all sin; and now, being justified by thy blood, much more shall I be saved from wrath through thee.

My Saviour's piercéd side
Pour'd out a double flood:
By water we are purified,
And pardon'd by the blood.

Look up, my soul, to Him
Whose death was thy desert,

And humbly view the living stream
Flow from his breaking heart.

There, on the curséd tree,
In dying pangs he lies,
Fulfils his Father's great decree,
And all our wants supplies.

Feb. 14.—*Nevertheless, I am continually with thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.* Ps. lxxiii. 23–26; Ps. xvi. 8–11.

Babes in religion long not only for Christ, but for sensible communion with him; and very often are they indulged with it, that they may be weaned from the world. But those of fuller age, who have their senses more exercised, are thankful that they can trust him when they do not see him, and can follow him when they feel no comfort,—relying more on the word and covenant of God than on those sensations which, though ever precious and desirable, are often withdrawn, that it may be seen whether we are so decided and eager as to follow God into a land not sown.

How oft have sin and Satan strove
To rend my soul from thee, my God!
But everlasting is thy love,
And Jesus seals it with his blood.

Amidst temptations sharp and strong,
My soul to this dear refuge flies:
Hope is my anchor, firm and strong,
While tempests blow and billows rise.

The gospel bears my spirits up;
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation of my hope
In oaths and promises and blood.

FEB. 15.—*There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God: God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved.* Ps. xlvi. 4, 5. *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.* 1 John iv. 4; Ps. cx. 2; Zech. ii. 5.

TRUE Christians, in a right spirit, are still subject to temptations from within and without; but, watching unto prayer, they do not fall by them. On the contrary, as temptations are great helps to discover their hidden infirmities and stir them up to be more cautious, serious, and faithful, they are followed and rewarded with great and glorious victories. Temptations

are not indeed joyous in themselves, but are attended with good fruit and blessed effects in the faithful. Hence St. James bids us count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations. What reason have those to be afraid of temptations who find that every one carries a new blessing along with it?

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high

Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, oh, leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me.

All my trust on thee is stay'd;
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing.

FEB. 16.—*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.* 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.* Rev. xiv. 13.

MANY persons claim to be so thoroughly evangelical, as they call it, in their views, that they are not willing to hear any thing about spiritual sorrow and distress, and will not yield to any influence that would drive them to importunate prayer and to the exercise of any other grace. Their plea is, that such a course is pursued only by the servile spirit that seeks to justify itself by the deeds of the law. This plea is of no value so long as unbelief and the infirmities of the flesh are present with us. They must ever be resisted and kept down. The spirit may be willing, and in boldly striving against sin will come to long only the more earnestly for its better home.

We know for us a rest remains,
When God will give us sweet release

From earth and all our mortal chains,
And turn our sufferings into peace.
Sooner or later, death will surely come
To end our sorrows and to take us home.
Be thou content.

FEB. 17.—*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* Phil. iv. 7. See also Isa. liii. 5; Col. i. 20.

"HE who walks in the way of holiness and of eternal life," says Professor Franke, "who boasts nothing of himself, but who finds his all in Christ,—he has his heart kept in perfect peace. Whenever the heart puffs itself up and seeks and finds its happiness elsewhere than in the forgiveness of sin, it strikes out into a false path, and in the end finds nothing but trouble." O Lord, may I ever be sensible of my own unworthiness, but at the same time know myself to be a child of grace through Jesus Christ. Keep my heart always meek and tender, that I may enjoy more of the light and power of thy gracious word.

The world may call herself my foe:
So be it; for I trust her not,

Even though a friendly face she show,
And heap with her good things my lot.
In thee alone will I rejoice:
Thou art the Friend, Lord, of my choice;
For thou art true when friendships fail;
'Mid storms of woe thy truth is still
My anchor: hate me as it will,
The world shall o'er me ne'er prevail.

FEB. 18.—*The Lord preserves the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.* Ps. cxvi. 6.

HE who walks in godly simplicity and humility, accounting his own infirmities always the greatest, will best be preserved from being puffed up and sifted by the enemy of souls. And surely nothing should humble us more than justification by free grace. The more we consider and carefully cherish that, the more this simple, childlike, quiet temper will increase; for since there is nothing in ourselves which can be depended upon, but all must be freely received from Christ, this, at the same time cutting off all vain boasting, settles our peace in Christ, who is our All and is firm enough to be rested upon.

It is only from thee, O my Saviour, that I

can learn true simplicity. Teach me, therefore, to turn mine eyes not upon others, but upon myself; humble me to the uttermost, and fashion me after thine own mind, that I may be careful to avoid every thing that is contrary to love. Keep me, O my Light, from all self-dependence and self-conceit; bridle my carnal reason and pull down all vain imaginations. Grant that mine eye may be fixed only on that one thing needful which lasts eternally, and that, in all my words, deeds, and gestures, I may always exemplify the simplicity, innocence, fidelity, and love of a little child. Matt. viii. 3.

Oh, from the world's vile slavery,
Almighty Saviour, set me free,
And, as my treasure is above,
Be there my thoughts, be there my love.

Feb. 19.—*The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall not want.* Ps. xxiii. 1. *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.* John x. 10, 28.

The Lord is indeed my Shepherd: what can I want? Nothing good is denied me, save only

at times the assurance of his gracious care. But even this sense of want is itself the beginning of better things; for it leads me to more fervent prayer, and my very necessities drive me to the green pastures and the still waters. So I find the Good Shepherd again, and he himself supplies all my need.

Loving Shepherd, kind and true,
  Wilt thou not in pity come
To thy lamb? As shepherds do,
  Bear me in thy bosom home:
Take me hence from earth's annoy
To thy home of endless joy.

O Lord Jesus, let me not
  'Mid the ravening wolves e'er fall:
Help me as a shepherd ought,
  That I may escape them all.
Bear me homeward on thy breas
To thy fold of endless rest.

FEB. 20.—*The Lord is our king, he will save us.* Isa. xxxiii. 22. *The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.* Ps. xxiv. 8. *The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.* Ps. cxviii. 15. *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* Phil. iv. 13. *For God is with us.* Isa. viii. 10.

THERE is no victory without a conflict; and the conflict does not always fail to leave wounds; but these wounds humble us and make us more watchful. Always abide in the wounds of the Redeemer, O my soul, and thou shalt be saved, thou shalt be strong in faith, thou shalt triumph over all thy foes, and with the voice of thanksgiving thou shalt sing, "Now, thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." 2 Cor. ii. 14.

Laugh to scorn, then, death and hell:
Laugh to scorn the gloomy grave:
Caught into the air to dwell
With the Lord who comes to save,
We shall trample on our foes,
Mortal weakness, fear, and woes.

Only see ye that your heart
Rise betimes from earthly lust.
Would you there with Him have part
Here obey your Lord, and trust.

Fix your hearts beyond the skies,
Whither ye yourselves would rise.

FEB. 21.—*He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me.* Ps. lv. 18.

O LORD, grant to my heart and conscience a perpetual refuge in thy wounds, that so I may be always protected against the condemnation of the law. Strengthen me with strength in my soul, that I may crucify the flesh and so live neither in slavish bondage and fear nor in carnal security. Teach me also to use both thy law and thy gospel aright, that, being clothed in the garments of salvation, I may hasten on to thy eternal rest.

Strive, when thou art called of God,
When he draws thee by his grace,
Strive to cast away the load
That would clog thee in the race.

Fight, though it may cost thy life;
Storm the kingdom, but prevail;
Let not Satan's fiercest strife
Make thee, warrior, faint or quail.

Gaze with mingled joy and fear
On the refuge thou hast found:

Know, while yet we linger here,
Perils ever hem us round.

Soldiers of the cross, be strong;
Watch and war 'mid fear and pain,
Daily conquering love and wrong,
Till our King o'er earth shall reign!

FEB. 22.—*The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* Numbers vi. 24-26. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.* John xiv. 27, 28. *In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.* John xvi. 33.

WE are yet in the world and meet with tribulation; yea, out of Christ, tribulation is to be met with everywhere. In order that we may not be overwhelmed by it, thus saith Jesus:—"Abide in me: in me ye shall have peace;" and so, trusting in his word, we get happily through.

O Lord, keep me ever close to thee, and let thy name always be the strong tower to

which my soul shall continually resort. So shall I remain firm and immovable, and, amidst all the tribulations of the world, ever find peace in thee, my Saviour.

Though to-day may not fulfil
All thy hopes, have patience still;
For perchance to-morrow's sun
Sees thy happier days begun.
As God willeth march the hours,
Bringing joy at last in showers,
And whate'er we ask is ours.

FEB. 23.—*The Lord do that which seemeth him good.* 2 Sam. x. 12.

A CHRISTIAN has still to complain of sin in his heart. If it be asked, How can Christ and sin dwell together in one heart? the answer is, As a king and rebels in one kingdom or town. He does not agree or correspond with them, but subdues them, and inspires the heart with an assurance of complete triumph. But where self-will has the dominion there is nothing but trouble and confusion; for unsanctified passions and a bad conscience not only are inward torments, but often occasion perplexity and damage in

our worldly affairs; whereas, when Christ occupies the throne and impresses a sense of pardoning love, we have a good conscience, abundance of peace, and can be content in the most trying outward circumstances.

Take great heed, therefore, O Christian, never to be led by thy own spirit, were it even in such things as seem to bring glory to God, if they are not of his own appointment. Our hearts are sometimes very deceitfully desirous of what pleases ourselves, while we pretend to seek God's glory; and, were we not crossed in these our designs, they would prove a great burden to our life. Blessed is he who not only prays with his lips, but is heartily willing also, that nothing but the will of the Lord should be done in every thing. It is God alone that understands what may be good or dangerous to our spiritual or temporal circumstances. We, being often blinded or drawn by our lusts, are too much inclined to choose at random what would be most detrimental.

FEB. 24.—*The Lord will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.* Ps. cii. 17. *They looked unto him, and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed.* Ps. xxxiv. 5. See also Matt. xv. 21–28; Luke xi. 5–13; xviii. 1–8; Matt. viii. 24–27.

THE load of outward and inward affliction is not always removed soon after the utterance of supplication, however sincere. Sometimes it is requisite, after much importunity, to wait from day to day, and even to endure additional distress: how else could faith and patience be exercised? If, therefore, the trial be sharp and lasting, it is not to weaken our faith, but to stir us up to be more diligent and earnest in prayer and the right use of the word of God: and thus to be so much more strengthened in faith; for whatever God sends upon us, it is not for the lessening, but for the increase, of our faith.

God is the refuge of his saints
When storms of sharp distress invade;
Ere we can offer our complaints,
Behold him present with his aid.

Let mountains from their seats be hurl'd
Down to the deep, and buried there,

Convulsions shake the solid world;
Our faith shall never yield to fear.

Though loud the troubled ocean roar,
Our souls may yet in peace abide,
While every nation, every shore,
Trembles, and dreads the swelling tide.

FEB. 25.—*I dwell in the high and holy place,—with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit shall fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* Isa. lvii. 15, 16.

To insist too much upon the sensible joy of faith might make weak Christians weaker still. Many a sincere Christian's heart is like a vessel with a narrow opening, which can receive heavenly comfort only by little drops. But dost thou feel thyself quite naked and void of all good? Christ will surely cover thee with the robe of righteousness. Go entirely out of thyself, look only on him for every thing; and whatever gifts of joy, peace, and holiness may be given thee, be very thankful for them, yet trust not in them, but

in Christ alone. This will make thee confident and keep thy heart at rest.

Thus saith the high and lofty One:
I sit upon my holy throne;
My name is God! I dwell on high,—
Dwell in my own eternity.

But I descend to worlds below;
On earth I have a mansion too:
The humble spirit and contrite
Is an abode of my delight.

The humble soul my words revive;
I bid the mourning sinner live,
Heal all the broken hearts I find,
And ease the sorrows of the mind.

FEB. 26.—*But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water* John xix. 34.

THAT was the opening of the stream of salvation for thee, O my soul! Now, if thou art able and willing to be nothing in thine own eyes but a sinner, and, drawn by the blood of Christ, wilt come hungering and thirsting after righteousness, thou shalt be filled, thou shalt be saved.

THE SOUL.

Let my heart and mind be purified
By the stream that flow'd from thy wounded side.

THE SAVIOUR.

Behold, from my wounded side there flows
A mingled stream, giving life to those
Who, truly repenting, fly to my arms.
Here, here their guilt no longer alarms;
Here, leaning upon my faithful breast,
They find the good hope of eternal rest.

THE SOUL.

Once a child of wrath, new courage I take.
Now, a child of God for Jesus' sake,
I shall speak of the precious blood that he shed,
Till my latest day, till I rest with the dead.

FEB. 27.—*Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* Luke xxii. 31, 32. *Yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.* Amos ix. 9. *For I will keep thee from the hour of temptation.* Rev. iii. 10.

SOMETIMES we may imagine ourselves to be divinely convinced of the will of God, both by seeming outward providences and inward persuasions of faith: meanwhile, Satan may be employing all his efforts to sift us. But

let us be of good courage: the Lord will disappoint him at last and order all things for the good of his people. May the Lord make us watchful against our own spirit, and against the evil one, especially when he is transformed into an angel of light, that it may not be in his power to sift us so as to gain an advantage over us, by our listening to his inward suggestions or yielding to his subtle temptations!

Here I can firmly rest!
I dare to boast of this:—
That God, the Highest and the Best,
My Friend and Father is.

From dangerous snares he saves:
Where'er he bids me go,
He checks the storms and calms the waves,
Nor lets aught work me woe.

FEB. 28.—*Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing gold; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.* 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4. *In rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.* Isaiah xxx. 15.

A CHRISTIAN'S best accoutrements and festival-attire are called (Col. iii. 10, 12, 14) "the new man, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, and, above all, charity." These are our true ornaments, and we should seek to be dressed in them. Reader, which dost thou adorn most,—body or soul? "O thou meek and quiet Lamb of God, justly I blush before thee when I consider my impatience and resentful feelings. I humbly beseech thee to forgive me these my transgressions and to soften me down into a better temper. Deliver me from peevish and wrathful propensities; and grant that in all inward and outward troubles I may prove that the same mind is in me which was in thyself. Make me daily more and more like a lamb, that on all occasions, grievous or joyful, I may be duly composed, and show

that excellent heavenly ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, not in many words, but in reality and power." Amen.

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of thy grace impart,
And let me live to thee.

MARCH.

MARCH 1.—*Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. xv. 54–57.

LORD, I receive thee indeed as my Mediator, and I rely upon thy death alone. Yet I still desire to press on, that I may know thee better and love thee more; for I am not yet wholly delivered from the bondage of fear. Let all thy providences, all my trials and blessings, serve to make me more believing; let them bind me more firmly to thy word, and so drive away all darkness and fear from my mind that I may calmly welcome my approaching end, and find that, through thy death, Death is indeed swallowed up in victory.

In the bonds of death He lay
Who for our offence was slain;
But the Lord is risen to-day,
Christ hath brought us life again.

Wherefore let us all rejoice,
Singing loud, with cheerful voice,
Hallelujah!

That was a wondrous war, I trow,
When Life and Death together fought.
But Life hath triumph'd o'er his foe;
Death is mock'd and set at naught.
'Tis even as the Scripture saith:—
Christ through death has conquer'd Death
Hallelujah!

MARCH 2.—*Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Matt. vii. 13, 14.

THIS sounds harsh in the ears of the old man, who would not have the law made use of in these gospel-times, either to the converted or unconverted; and yet to the old man the law, and not the gospel, more especially belongs. St. Paul, the great preacher of the gospel, made use of the law to arouse unconverted Felix from his security (Acts xxiv. 25) and to warn the converted Romans from falling into it again. (Rom. viii. 13.) For even Christians as yet feel the infirmities of

the flesh. In this respect they also need to have the admonitions of the law addressed tc them. The gospel serves them for the edifying of the spirit. O Lord, restrain and keep down the desires of the flesh in me, that it may not triumph over the spirit and deprive it of its rightful nourishment.

Which way dost thou walk? Examine thyself. Is it in the narrow way? Art thou quite sure of it? Venture not to go any farther at random. It is a matter of great consequence: if thou wilt be safe, try better for it: thou mayest easily be deceived. Alas! thou art surely in the broad way to destruction if thou still lovest and art conformed to the world. Art thou but indifferent with regard to the things of God, relishing more the vanities, pleasures, companies, treasures, and honours of this world? Thou art not in the good, narrow way that leads unto life. Oh, consider this well, and stop short before it be too late and thou drop into the bottomless pit of perdition.

Strait is the way, the door is strait,
That leads to joys on high:
'Tis but a few that find the gate;
While crowds mistake and die.

MARCH 3.—*The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.* Isa. xxvi. 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.* Ps. lxiii. 8.

MY Saviour and my Friend, thou hast given thyself wholly unto me, and in return thou dost claim me as entirely thine own, that in perfect bliss we may be united in one. Take, then, my body, soul and spirit, all that I have, all that I am; and by thy grace I will pledge myself to be faithful to thee forever.

Jesus demands the whole heart. To surrender this should be a pleasure, and not a pain. Deny him this, and you will be heaping up sorrow. Yield all to him, and he will grant all to you, more than you can ask or think. He will fill you and make you overflow with benefits. We should even pray with fervour that the Lord would be pleased to receive our whole hearts as his; for as the bride cheerfully approves of the purpose of the bridegroom to claim her entirely as his own, so the soul finds its sweetest delight in the thought, My Maker is my Husband, and he is pleased to claim what I am so glad to yield,—all the affections of my heart, to be his alone and his forever.

Though all to thee were faithless,
I yet were true, my Head,
To show that love is deathless,
From earth not wholly fled.

Here didst thou live in sadness
And die in pain for me;
Wherefore I give, with gladness,
My heart and soul to thee.

MARCH 4.—*A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps.* Prov. xvi. 9. *There are many devices in a man's heart: nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.* Prov. xix. 21.

MANY a man speaks, boasts of himself as being kind-hearted and good-natured; but it does not occur to him to notice the many vain devices, the foolish and sinful desires, that arise in his heart. We may be reminded indeed of what the Scriptures say,—that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; but we should remember that the *good treasure of the heart* is nothing less than the new creature, the new man. Nothing good can be brought out of the mere heart itself in its natural state. For there the old man still dwells, the evil trea-

sure, sin; and this springs forth and grows up of itself like thorns and tares.

Be thou my guide, and I shall follow,
With childlike spirit, O my God.
My own way ever leads to sorrow;
But thine, thine is the peaceful road.
In times of sadness oft I'm forced to say,
"This is because I sought to have my way."

Henceforth I yield to thy direction;
Be mine no more the anxious mind:
Dost thou send joy or prompt correction,
All, all is right, and I'm resign'd;
For in thy hand I see a Father's rod.
I must, I will, submit to thee, my God.

MARCH 5.—*The troubles of my heart are enlarged: oh, bring thou me out of my distresses.* Ps. xxv. 17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* Ps. li. 17.

IT is well for us to be upon our guard against a depressed spirit. But he who, without the experience of a broken heart, is always flattering himself with the promises of the gospel, is exposed to great danger, and, in his imaginary security, may become very careless and vain. As long as we are in the world,

our spiritual improvement is connected with contrition of heart. It can do us no harm. On the other hand, it humbles us and drives us to Jesus. But no sincere heart will ever rely upon its own brokenness and contrition. Only in Christ will it place its trust, who alone has made atonement. Lord, dispose us to receive thy word in the love of it, and deliver us from the folly of those who vainly pervert thy gospel to the indulgence of their own lusts and fancies.

On thee, O my God, I rest,
Letting life float calmly on;
For I know the last is best,
When the crown of joy is won.

In thy might all things I bear,
In thy love find bitter sweet,
And, with all my grief and care,
Sit in patience at thy feet.

MARCH 6.—*Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget*

also thine own people, and thy father's house: so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him. Ps. xlv. 9–11, 13.

OBSERVE, O my soul, though thy celestial Bridegroom finds not in thee any merit, worthiness, or beauty, he will wash thee with his blood; he will adorn thee and make thee truly amiable to himself and to his Father. Oh, sweet and eternal truth! "He has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Being clothed with his righteousness, we have more than angelic beauty. If we have received the spirit of adoption, let us cleave to Christ alone, love him above all things, and walk in his commandments. This is not only our duty, but a needful evidence of our sonship.

The King of saints, how fair his face,
Adorn'd with majesty and grace!
He comes with blessings from above,
And wins the nations to his love!

At his right hand our eyes behold
The queen array'd in purest gold;
The world admires her heavenly dress,
Her robe of joy and righteousness.

He forms her beauties like his own;
He calls and seats her near his throne:

Fair stranger, let thy heart forget
The idols of thy native state.

So shall the King the more rejoice
In thee, the favourite of his choice:
Let him be loved, and yet adored,
For he's thy Maker and thy Lord.

MARCH 7.—*They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts.* Gal. v. 24.

"ALTHOUGH," as Luther says upon this verse, "the flesh be still alive and frequently stir, yet it cannot fulfil its desires when it is fastened to the cross." With this crucifying of the flesh we have to do as long as we live. This is the cross that we must take up and bear every day. It is this that delivers us from many another burden or gives us courage and comfort under the load.

O cross, we hail thy bitter reign;
Oh, come, thou well-belovéd guest,
Whose sorest sufferings work not pain,
Whose heaviest burden is but rest.

Is not our blessed Saviour bound
In closest ties of love to those
Who faithful to the cross are found
Through ceaseless tears, through saddest woes?

Pledge of our glorious home afar,
Thee, holy sign, with joy we take,
Sign of a peace life could not mar,
A holy peace death could not shake.

Up, brethren of the cross, and haste
Onward, where Christ hath gone before!
We hymn his praise the while we taste
The shame and death he sometime bore.

MARCH 8.—*And the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.* Luke viii. 7. *Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.* Jer. iv. 3.

WHOEVER is faithful and true, and in the sincerity of his heart prompt to pull up the smallest roots of sin and cast them out, he secures for himself deliverance from many a hard struggle that would otherwise await him. By this process the flesh waxeth weaker and weaker, but the spirit stronger and stronger; and so the conflict between them becomes less violent. We must not, however, expect entirely to escape this conflict; for the foe, our flesh, is always about us; and that is the enemy of all that is good.

Amidst the thorns that pierce the flesh
True faith the rose espies;
But when the sense grasps roses fresh,
Faith oft is pierced and dies.

Choose what you will, you'll find the thorn;
And, should the flesh be glad,
The spirit all the while will mourn,
And, sorely pierced, be sad.

So cast the smallest roots away,
Lest to a hedge they grow;
Lest the short pleasures of the day
End in long years of woe.

MARCH 9.—*And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.* 2 Peter iii. 15.

THE work of grace in the heart sometimes advances very slowly. Even this supplies believers with a valuable lesson; for it teaches them how much they have to depend upon the long-suffering of God, and it encourages them to have patience with one another.

O my God, I would magnify thy name for that long-suffering and that truth that has borne with all my infirmities. I have wickedly broken my vows and turned aside from thee, and yet thou hast not cast me off. Thou hast made me to see the error of my ways, to taste the bitterness of sin; and I am here this hour a living monument of thy

forbearance. Oh, let this thy goodness lead me to repentance, that I may abhor every evil way, and that, being renewed in the spirit of my mind, I may live and walk in the peace and love of God.

Hath God cast off forever?
Can time his truth impair?
His tender mercy never
Shall I presume to share?

Hath he his loving-kindness
Shut up in endless wrath?
No! this is my own blindness,
That cannot see his path.

MARCH 10.—*It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed; because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. For the Lord will not cast off forever; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.* Lam. iii. 22, 23, 31–33. See also Heb. xii. 11.

THOUGH our sins be forgiven, nevertheless, we may meet with chastening; yet this is the work not of wrath but of mercy. Chastening reveals and relieves our infirmities; for as far as we feel our infirmities and desire help, so

far have we empty vessels which Christ the Lord will fill. Hast thou at any time any very pressing need? Despair not, but say, Here, Lord, is a very large vessel, in which thou canst deposit a large measure of grace; and thy faithfulness will supply all I need.

And my soul despaireth not,
Loving God amid her woe:
Grief that wrings and breaks the heart
Only they who hate him know:
They who love him still possess
Comfort in their worst distress.

MARCH 11.—*The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again.* 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

IF the love and power of Christ constrain us, we must needs be meditating and relying on him and his death. This will cut off all self-confidence and lead us entirely to him, that he may work every thing in us and through us. O Lord, may thy love on the cross fire my frozen heart also,—that I may

now begin to love and praise thee purely and fervently, and to offer my whole life up to thee, an entire sacrifice of love!

Raise your triumphant songs
To an immortal tune;
Let the wide earth resound the deeds
Celestial grace has done.

Sing how eternal Love
Its chief Belovéd chose,
And bade him raise our wretched race
From an abyss of woes.

Now, sinners, dry your tears;
Let hopeless sorrows cease;
Bow to the sceptre of his love
And take the offer'd peace.

Lord, we obey thy call;
We lay an humble claim
To the salvation thou hast brought,
And love and praise thy name.

MARCH 12.—*But the greatest of these is charity.* 1 Cor. xiii. 13. *Let all your things be done with charity.* 1 Cor. xvi. 14. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* Rom. xiii. 8.

WHATEVER we do we should do in the name of God, who himself is Love; and so our works

will follow us and abide forever. But our debt of love cannot be discharged by occasional acts of charity and giving of alms. With all this, we are still debtors, both to ourselves and to our fellow-men. Every thing that we have depends upon the Divine disposal; and beyond this nothing is our own. Whoever reserves any thing for himself lays up in his heart the seeds of trouble and sorrow. He deprives himself of peace and sharpens the stings with which conscience will pierce him at last.

Great are the works of Christian love:
It changes night to day;
It makes us like the saints above,
And charms our griefs away.

Its triumphs shall be clear and bright,
Though all things else shall end:
Then let its faithful, guiding light
Our present walks attend.

Let Love direct in all our ways,
In all our goings move,
Love be the subject of our lays.
Our watchword still be Love

MARCH 13.—*Sin is a reproach to any people* Prov. xiv. 34.

Do not deceive yourself by relying upon a false faith. No sin can have dominion over you if your faith be sincere. He who does not know the infirmities of his own heart is very easily satisfied with what he may call his faith; but he who knows his own heart knows also that to exercise true faith is a great and difficult attainment. To reach this, we require indeed the aid of that power by which Christ himself was raised up from the dead, and which the Apostle Paul has so wonderfully described, Eph. i. 21. Usually men are apt to think that to believe is the simplest and easiest of all things to be done. Alas for the security and delusion in which the world is rushing on! Lord, send thou deliverance.

I'm like a helpless captive sold
Under the power of sin:
I cannot do the good I would,
Nor keep my conscience clean.

My God! I cry with every breath
For thy kind power to save,
To break the yoke of sin and death
And thus redeem the slave.

MARCH 14.—*Wherefore, seeing we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.* Heb. xii. 1, 2.

SIN is the old man. It lives and acts not only outwardly in the world but inwardly in the heart and spirit. The Apostle Paul declares —and, indeed, the whole Scriptures teach— that the chief end for which the Christian has to strive is to put off the old man and to put on the new. The Christian, therefore, has to strive; yea, his whole life is a conflict; and he that is not sensible of this is empty, blind, and effeminate.

Painful is the self-denial
That requires us to forget,
In the time of fiery trial,
Sins that easily beset.

In that hour should we surrender
All we love, and yet retain
One dear sin to us most tender,
Satan would the victory gain.

Wilt thou conquer? Up! be doing!
Arm thee always for the fight,
In the narrow way pursuing
Jesus and the sons of light.

MARCH 15.—*The time is short.* 1 Cor. vii. 29. *Redeeming the time.* Eph. v. 16. *For here have we no continuing-city; but we seek one to come.* Heb. xiii. 14.

IT is only in respect to time that a Christian can be said to be covetous. All his desire is so to employ his time that some everlasting gain may follow. He covets not gold. He yields himself not to the lusts of the flesh. On the other hand, these lusts, being contrary to the grace that is in him, often fill him with shame and confusion. He will readily be content with little here below: yea, if need be, he will suffer the loss even of that little, if by so doing he can increase his treasures above. In all his walk and conversation he seeks to lay hold of eternal life. Upon the earth he is only as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night.

Heavenward stretch, my soul, thy wings;
Heavenly nature canst thou claim:
There is naught of earthly things
Worthy to be all thine aim.

Heavenward! Faith discerns the prize
That is waiting us afar;
And my heart would swiftly rise
High o'er sun and moon and star.

Heavenwards! Heavenwards! Only this
Is my watchword on the earth;
For the love of heavenly bliss
Counting all things little worth

MARCH 16.—*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.* Rom. xv. 1. *Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* Gal. vi. 1. *Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant?* Rom. vi. 4.

EXTRAORDINARY quickenings and strengthenings, being often followed by particular temptations, conflicts, and sufferings, require a particular watchfulness, if we would be earnest not to provoke the Lord to visit us with sore punishments for our carelessness. Fear, therefore; rejoice with trembling; and, as a needful means to secure thyself from falling, temper thy joy with humility and gentleness towards the faults of others. Be not high-minded; say not, when thou observest the misconduct of others, "Nothing would tempt me to do as they have done;" for if God does not hold thee up himself thou wilt surely make greater mistakes. Therefore thou hadst better not look upon others, but upon thyself; and, for fear of falling, be con-

tinually watchful in prayer. A great many would not have fallen so deep had they been truly humble and more charitable in judging of others. He who exalts himself above others, and does not bear with the weak, is sometimes humbled and debased under the very weakest of all. Bear, therefore, since God bears with thee: he that bears most with others shows the greatest strength.

Make us of one heart and mind,
Courteous, pitiful, and kind,
Lowly, meek in thought and word,
Altogether like our Lord.

MARCH 17.—*Thou art my Rock and my Fortress: therefore for thy name's sake lead me and guide me.* Ps. xxxi. 3. *They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel.* Jer. xxxi. 9.

HE that comes in this manner will certainly be led of God. Now, O Lord, I am blind, and heartily desire also to be directed by thee alone in all ways, in great and also in little things. Suffer me never to follow my own spirit and natural inclinations, whatever good

appearance they may have. Be pleased to cross them continually, whenever they are contrary to thy will. Teach me also to be watchful, and to keep their earliest movements in subjection, that they may not gain dominion over me, and that I may not be afterwards involved in a conflict in which I shall perish forever.

Thou art my Portion, O my God,
And Christ my Living Way:
Incline my heart to keep thy word
And on thyself to stay.

I would be always wholly thine;
Oh, save thy servant, Lord!
Thou art my Shield, my Hiding-Place;
My hope is in thy word.

MARCH 18.—*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.* Isa. xxvi. 3, 4. *Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.* Isa. xxvii. 5.

To enjoy an undisturbed peace, great care must be taken that we do not look and depend upon any thing in ourselves, since all is but

imperfect and ever will be so. We are to trust only in the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world; to feed our souls in this gospel of peace, and be ever seeking him by diligent prayer, continuing watchful, faithful, quiet, and humble; for we never lose any thing of our peace except it be stolen by pride or other unguarded affections.

Hence from my soul, sad thoughts, begone,
And leave me to my joys:
My tongue shall triumph in my God
And make a joyful noise.

Darkness and doubts had veil'd my mind
And drown'd my head in tears,
Till sovereign grace, with shining rays,
Dispell'd my gloomy fears.

Oh, what immortal joys I felt,
And raptures all divine,
When Jesus told me I was His,
And my Belovéd mine!

In vain the tempter frights my soul,
And breaks my peace in vain:
One glimpse, dear Saviour, of thy face
Revives my joys again.

MARCH 19.— *With his stripes we are healed.* Isa. liii. 5.

O ALMIGHTY Saviour, be thou my strength, all helpless as I am, and keep me always near thy side, that I may be completely restored and abide with thee forever. My motto shall ever be, I am in Christ: my refuge is his wounds. I am nothing, he is my all. In myself I am all unclean, yea, an abomination; but in him I am adorned with the robe of righteousness and accepted in the Beloved. His cross alone is my refuge and my boast.

Yea, in this boast my soul shall stand,
That Christ for me hath died;
My refuge be beneath his hand
And near his wounded side.

I seek to have no other love
Than Christ, who died for me;
Naught, naught, dear Lord, my heart shall move,
Long as I live, from thee.

And when at last my life shall end,
Then let my dying breath
Still whisper, "Jesus, Faithful Friend:"
So shall I conquer death.

MARCH 20.—*Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them. I am thy Part and thy Inheritance.* Numb. xviii. 20.

WHOEVER loves and possesses the Lord Jesus finds unspeakably more delight, honour, and riches in him than in all other things. Then all is willingly denied for his sake; and this denial springs from faith. Now, O Lord, thou art the All I need to make me happy, the only Inheritance that can supply all my wants: to draw near to thee is my greatest joy. I desire to love thee evermore, and to show that love by keeping thy commandments; and I pray that a sweet sense of thy love to me may become my daily portion and my bosom treasure.

Engage this roving, treacherous heart,
Great God, to choose the better part,
To scorn the trifles of a day
For joys that none can take away.

Then let the wildest storms arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies;
No fatal shipwreck shall I fear,
But all my treasures with me bear.

If thou, blest Jesus, still art nigh,
Cheerful I live, and cheerful die,—
Secure, when mortal comforts flee,
To find ten thousand worlds in thee.

MARCH 21.—*Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.* Ps xxxviii. 22. *Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.* Ps. xxxv. 3. *I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not: I will help thee: fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. And thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.* Isa. xli. 13, 10, 16.

BELIEVERS also fear; and this is certainly better than to be high-minded and presumptuous. Many of the primitive Christians rushed rashly on towards martyrdom but apostatized at last. Others feared lest in the hour of trial they too might unhappily fall away; but they remained steadfast. So in subsequent ages of persecution, when many were exposed to the violence of their foes, some even said, boastingly, "I will breakfast on the rack; I will dine on the gibbet;" but, after all, they denied the faith. God resisteth the proud. Lord, be thou my helper: let me have no confidence in the flesh, but trust in thee and in thy help and in thy faithfulness forever, and in thy name dare all things.

From dangerous snares he saves:
Where'er he bids me go,

He checks the storms and calms the waves,
Nor lets aught work me woe.

MARCH 22.—*Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now, they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.* 1 Cor. ix. 25. *For he that overcometh shall inherit all things.* Rev. xxi. 7.

To be only almost a Christian is to be the subject of manifold vexations; but to be a Christian altogether makes all easy and pleasant. Such as desire to have the whole of Christ's salvation, and all that is his, must needs give themselves up to him, not only in part, but wholly, according to that fundamental and most reasonable rule, "All for all." As far as we deny him any thing, we make ourselves unhappy; but the more we are resigned to him, the more we are fit to enjoy him and his spiritual blessings.

Many would sooner be persuaded to follow Christ if it was allowed to serve him by halves and reserve some things to themselves. But what would that profit them? Christ will not be bargained with; and nothing is more dangerous than the dividing of our hearts between

him and the world, or waiting from time to time for a more convenient season. Thus you may live many years and be neither cold nor hot, and so at last be rejected by the Lord. Consider this well, O ye double-minded and lukewarm. Christianity requires great striving, and overcometh all things, even our most favourite and darling lusts. Awake, therefore, to righteousness; spare yourselves no longer; rise above the trifles of this world; fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

MARCH 23.—*A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* John xiii. 34.

ALL the commandments of God are commandments of love, tending to our real good and great happiness: far from being grievous to those who have faith and love, the practice thereof is life and peace. The world may think it a grievous burden; but this is a great mistake. Sin is grievous. In hatred, envy, anger, revenge, pride, there is nothing but torment and slavery; but love produces rest and pleasure. Thus a sinner always punishes

himself, and is robbed of peace and many blessings, by disobeying the commandments of God.

Love suffers long with patient eye,
Nor is provoked in haste;
She lets the present injury die,
And long forgets the past.

She nor desires nor seeks to know
The scandals of the time,
Nor looks with pride on those below,
Nor envies those who climb.

She lays her own advantage by,
To seek her neighbour's good:
So God's own Son came down to die
And bought our lives with blood.

March 24.—*One thing is needful; and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.* Luke x. 42.

We must not pretend to serve God by only going to church and doing other acts of outward devotion: while we are dead and cold, our religion is vain. They who, like Mary, seek grace from the words of Christ, receive the assurance of Divine approbation; and this stimulates them to fresh acts of piety and

beneficence. It is almost impossible for such to go on in haughtiness, envy, hatred, and disobedience. Grace and faith will resist it, and make them lowly, gentle, willing, obedient, active, without relying on any works of their own.

He who obtains Christ, the one thing needful, receives with him all the rest, and has no more occasion to be troubled about many things; he being our All, we may always live happily; whereas the children of this world must always be cumbered and divided between fears and hopes about their fate. We shall never find this good part in the circle of fashionable pleasure, nor yet in the works of the law. Faith alone takes hold of it. Whoever withdraws his heart and senses from the noise and bustle of this world, looking for salvation through the blood and righteousness of Christ, will certainly find there that better part which shall not be taken from him.

The one thing needful—that good part
Which Mary chose with all her heart—
I would pursue with heart and mind
And seek unwearied till I find.

MARCH 25 —*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* Ps. li. 7. *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.* Ps. li. 9. *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* Isa. i. 18. *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.* Isa. xliv. 22.

WE must not keep away from Christ on account of our stumblings and manifold faults; this would cast us under the law again, and bind us under condemnation; but we should humble ourselves directly before God, and seek earnestly for pardon through the blood of Christ. The longer we delay this, the worse our case will grow; and the sooner it is done, the sooner we shall have forgiveness. The Lord not imputing those sins to us which are sincerely repented of, our soul returns to its rest again. And, instead of falling into carnal security, (as some may think,) we shall thus strengthen our faith and become more watchful. Hasten, therefore, and come as soon and as well as thou canst. He will receive thee, though thou advance towards him slowly and with trembling.

O Lord, I fall before thy face:
My only refuge is thy grace:
No bleeding beast, nor flood, nor sea,
Can wash the dismal stain away.

Jesus, my God, thy blood alone
Hath power sufficient to atone.
Thy blood can make me white as snow:
No Jewish types could cleanse me so.

MARCH 26.—*Deliver us from all evil.* Matt. vi. 13. *Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* Isa. xlii. 1, 2. *Christ has by his own blood once entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* Heb. ix. 1, 2.

THIS precious redemption is the foundation of our present deliverance, and will, finally, produce an everlasting deliverance from all evil. He who loathes and detests the evil, not only of punishment, but of sin itself, and consequently pants after Jesus, both for his love and for his likeness, has faith already, and sin has lost its dominion over him. Though he may be tempted very severely, yet he is under

the law no more; for, the reigning power of sin being broken, the law has lost its condemning power also: we are delivered from the power of the Evil One, and we may be sure of a continual—nay, an eternal—redemption. We may often feel the evil, but by prayer and watchfulness shall be as often delivered from it also.

Thy solemn vows are on me, Lord;
Thou shalt receive my praise:
I'll sing, "How faithful is thy word!
How righteous all thy ways!"

Thou hast secured my soul from death:
Oh, set thy prisoner free,
That heart and hand, and life and breath,
May be employ'd for thee.

MARCH 27.—*Stir up the gift of God which is in thee.* 2 Tim. i. 6.

How can this be done? By looking as well upon thine own great poverty and wants, as upon the riches of that grace which is in Christ for thee, and so drawing near to God through him in faith. But it is not enough to do this once for all, or now and then only. It is to be

thy daily work. One day's omission may greatly injure thy soul. The morning hours are especially adapted to this purpose. This must be directly laid hold on to converse with God in prayer, before we meddle with any thing else in our business, though ever so needful and important, lest we be entangled and distracted the whole day. In order to obtain the more strength, draw as near to Christ as possible, and plead with him, as if it were the last time. Pour out thy whole heart before him, not giving over too soon; be instant in thy supplications, at least with continual inward groaning, till thy heart burn within thee and thou feel the quickening influence of his grace and Spirit. Then great care is to be taken to preserve this blessing and strength in a quiet and well-composed mind: examine thyself frequently, especially at nights, how the day has been spent.

I'll lift my hands, I'll raise my voice,
While I have breath to pray or praise:
This work shall make my heart rejoice
And spend the remnant of my days.

MARCH 28.—*Vanity of vanities: all is vanity.* Eccles. i. 2.

THE selfish aims which men often pursue in their political relations and in the common walks of life,—the low anxieties, the mean motives, by which they are influenced,—these are acknowledged to be vanity. But we may say the same even of those great attainments in learning by which ambition seeks only to glorify itself, and, indeed, of all our works which, however fair they be, are not wrought in Christ and out of faith and love for him. They are all vanity. Lord, may I be rooted and grounded only in thee!

Vanity, an empty show,
From which no good fruit can grow,
Never honours Jesus' name,
Keeps the spirit earthly, lame.
All its works, its every thought,
Cleave to earth and come to naught.
Often has it sharply tried,
Tempted me to turn aside.

Yet I will not turn from thee;
Yet my joy in Christ shall be;
Help me, make me strong and bold,
Firm and fast thy grace to hold.

This world and her lusts I leave;
Only to my Lord I cleave.
All their promises are lies;
But who follows thee is wise.

MARCH 29.—*It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.* Lament. iii. 26. *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* Col. iii. 3, 4. *In returning and rest shall ye be saved.* Isa. xxx. 15.

LORD, I ever need thy help. But thou art even more willing to help than I am to seek thy favour. How bountifully hast thou dealt with me, according to thy word! (Ps. xiii. 6.) Yea, thou hast not turned away from me. How hast thou rejoiced over me to do me good! (Jer. xxxii. 40, 41.) Oh, grant me faith and patience; for thine own time is the best time to send deliverance.

Only thy restless heart keep still
And wait in cheerful hope, content
To take whate'er his gracious will,
His all-discerning love, hath sent.
Doubt not our inmost wants are known
To Him who chose us for his own.

He knows when joyful hours are best;
He sends them as he sees it meet:
When thou hast borne the fiery test,
And art made free from all deceit,
He comes to thee all unaware
And makes thee own his loving care.

MARCH 30.—*For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Titus ii. 11, 12.

THERE are persons who affect entirely to disregard personal merit and the deeds of the law, claiming to be simply and altogether evangelical. The consequence often is gross excesses, even wild licentiousness. He, however, who abides truly in the grace of the gospel keeps himself under a strict and steady discipline, never rushing out to indulge in the lusts of the flesh nor puffing up in spiritual pride. True grace produces meekness of heart, watchfulness, and fervor of spirit.

So let our lips and lives express
The holy gospel we profess;
So let our works and virtues shine
To prove the doctrine all divine.

Thus shall we best proclaim abroad
The honours of our Saviour-God,
When the salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin.

Our flesh and sense must be denied,
Passion and envy, lust and pride;
While justice, temperance, truth, and love
Our inward piety approve.

MARCH 31.—*It is enough: now, O Lord, take away my life.* 1 Kings xix. 4. *Mine hour is not yet come.* John ii. 4.

O MY Saviour, accept me, even as I offer myself wholly unto thee, to do and to suffer according to thy will, both in life and in death. Make use of me, and of all that is mine, as it may seem good in thy sight; and let me never presume to walk in the ways of my own heart. Whenever I lean to my own understanding I find trouble and sorrow; but when I follow only thee I have peace and joy in believing; for thou doest all things well: thou wilt guide me with thy counsel and afterwards receive me to glory. Amen.

Selfish thoughts and wishes
Do but drag the heart

From the path of safety,
  From the better part.
I will follow Jesus,
  Even in my tears:
He will ever guide me;
  He will calm my fears.

Through life's changing seasons
  Till my days are past,
Let me still be faithful,
  Faithful till the last.
Whether I must labour,
  Whether pains endure,
He his help hath promised
  Made salvation sure.

APRIL.

APRIL 1.—*It is finished.* John xix. 30.

LORD, deliver me from every refuge of lies until all is finished. Let thy wounds and thy finished work ever be the refuge of my soul. Nothing else do I desire but to know that I am justified and safe in thee. In thee I am complete and find all that I seek after.

It is finish'd: be the word
Ne'er forgotten, O my soul!
He that speaks it is thy Lord;
He hath power to make thee whole.

Shall I yield to helpless grief,
O'er my sin vent endless sighs?
No! in faith I find relief:
"It is finish'd!" Jesus cries.

It is finish'd: then am I
By his name raised from the dust:
To this Tower of strength I fly;
Here's the Refuge of my trust.

O my soul, forget it not;
Live or suffer for thy Lord;
And where'er may fall thy lot,
"It is finish'd!" be thy word.

APRIL 2.—*God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* Gal. vi. 14.

A TRUE believer has nothing to glory in but Christ alone. Even in his very best performances, he will be often deeply humbled, and cry out, "Lord, enter not into judgment." And well he may; for the ground of our glory, comfort, and salvation is not in works, but in Christ and the free grace of God,—who, for his Son's sake, lays nothing to our charge, but daily covers and pardons all our iniquities. And thus believers, walking steadily, might always be kept in solid peace; for the cross of Christ is a solid and unshaken foundation.

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the cross of Christ, my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er his body on the tree:
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

APRIL 3.—*And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger.* Numb. xxxv. 12. *We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.* Isa. xxvi. 1.

BE careful, therefore, that you be not tempted to depart from this refuge of safety. What is gone is gone; and you cannot, by the infliction of any torment or labour upon yourself, make good your loss. But all this Christ the Lord hath done. Pride is deceitful: therefore be on your guard, that you become not high-minded nor presumptuous. Be ready to condemn yourself and to acknowledge all your sins; but make haste to bring your ransom-price with you, the blood of Christ, and fly at once to the wounds of your Saviour. Lord, help me to regard my sins as already forgiven and blotted out; make me strong in the faith, that as a good soldier I may always strive against sin and so triumph forever.

Christ liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!
Scarce canst thou bear thy cross? Then fly
To him, where only rest is sweet:
Thy God is great, his refuge nigh,
His strength upholds the tottering feet.

Trust him, for his grace is sure;
Ever doth his truth endure;
Soul, forget not, in thy pains,
Christ o'er all forever reigns.

APRIL 4.—*He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.* Isa. xxvii. 6. *They shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.* Isa. xxxvii. 31. *They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.* Ps. xcii. 14. *Her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.* Jer. xvii. 8.

TRUE Christians form a lowly estimate of their spiritual attainments,—accounting themselves, comparatively, barren trees in the plantation of God. Hence, when they approach the last tribunal, they will be ready to disclaim those pretensions which even their Judge will distinctly support: (Matt. xxv. 37–39.) The reason is, they are poor in spirit, and are not satisfied with the fruits which they have borne: all that they were ever tempted to pronounce excellent in themselves vanishes before the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. Grant, O Lord, that I may earnestly

seek to bring forth fruit, and may grow in fruitfulness as I grow in years, and never cease from yielding fruit, hereby proving myself to be a tree of the Lord's planting, whose leaf is green and whose branches are flourishing and productive. Yet bless me also with deep poverty of spirit, that I may acknowledge myself still to be nothing, having nothing of my own to glory in or justify me, and thus may esteem Christ my All and rest upon him wholly.

Laden with fruits of age, they show
The Lord is holy, just, and true:
None that attend his gates shall find
A God unfaithful or unkind.

APRIL 5.—*The Breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate; and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them.* Micah ii. 13. *Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.* John xvi. 33; Heb. xii. 1, 2.

SOMETIMES the enemy seems to get an advatage over us; but the battle is not yet over. At last, O believer, thou shalt have the victory. In hard struggles remember the power of Christ, who, in his resurrection, broke

through every obstruction. With him thou canst also break through and be more than conqueror. Yea, in every conflict, if thy faith be firm, thou canst be sure of victory beforehand; for faith engages Christ's power, and his power insures victory. It is as impossible for thine enemies to keep thee always in bonds as it was impossible that Christ could be kept in the grave by the stone, seal, and keepers. Nay, the greater their force is, the more glorious will be the victory of Christ over them.

Hosannah to our conquering King!
All hail, incarnate Love!
Ten thousand songs and glories wait
To crown thy head above.

Thy victories and thy deathless fame
Through the wide world shall run,
And everlasting ages sing
The triumphs thou hast won.

APRIL 6.—*But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.* Mal. iv. 2. *If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the salvation of God.* John xi. 40. *Who against hope believed in hope.* Rom. iv. 18.

IF we are never willing to go further than our own reason can guide us or our own senses direct, we stand in the way of our own improvement. We shall never be enlightened by the Sun of Righteousness, nor learn to see by faith. Unbelief! Source of all sin! Yet who believes this? We may ask of hundreds, Hast thou faith? Every one will answer, Yes. And yet perhaps he has not even the beginning of faith,—that is, a hunger and thirst after righteousness: he has never had a broken heart, in which alone God works faith: he has not even asked for such a heart. Luther says, "Implore God to grant you faith: otherwise you will live without it forever." Lord, I have entreated thee and prayed for the gift of faith: it is my constant prayer. Therefore I have what I ask.

O Sun of Righteousness, arise
And let me see thy light,

Remove the blindness of my eyes;
For thou canst give me sight.

Oh for the glory of thy grace!
Teach me by faith to see,
That I may find my resting-place,
Health, life,—yea, all,—in thee.

April 7.—*Let your moderation be known unto all men* Phil. iv. 5. *Charity edifieth.* 1 Cor. viii. 1.

If thou rebukest others, and wouldest have them to be like thee, thou oughtest to examine thyself first, whether thy rebukes flow from a blind party-zeal, impatience, and self-will, or from a true principle of love, and whether thou art also much in prayer for them, both before and after. He who lays the long-sufferings of the Son of God truly to heart, and considers how gently that heavenly Benefactor has treated him, and still treats him, like the weakest child, must needs be moderate also towards all men, and think, "If no one else would bear with others, surely I must." May the Lord give us all the right spirit of meekness, to show all lenity to our fellow-Christians!

Watch o'er my lips, and guard them, Lord,
From every rash and heedless word;
Nor let my feet incline to tread
The guilty path where sinners lead.

Oh, may the righteous, when I stray,
Smite and reprove my wandering way!
Their gentle words, like ointment shed,
Shall never bruise, but cheer my head.

When I behold them press'd with grief,
I'll cry to Heaven for their relief,
And, by my warm petitions, prove
How much I prize their faithful love.

April 8.—*Put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?* Ps. lvi. 8. *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.* Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6.

Believer, if thou art now reaping in joy and singing hymns of triumph, be thankful; but remember that this work belongs more to the next world than the present. Here weeping and rejoicing follow each other, and sorrow will oft find a lodging in the bosom of faith. For there is no retreat from the field of battle; and thine enemies will not leave

thee while thou hast a breath to draw. Let this be a check to impatience. It is indeed needful to be humbled under a sense of thy misery, so as to sigh, groan, and weep often; and this is the true seed for eternity. Not a single tear or groan will be lost. They are all in the book of the Lord.

God counts the sorrows of his saints;
Their groans affect his ears;
He has a book for their complaints,
A bottle for their tears.

The Lord can clear the darkest skies,—
Can give us day for night,—
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight.

April 9.—*Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life.* Matt. vii. 14. *Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* Heb. xii. 14.

All this is intended as an admonition to believers. But how dreadful the prospect before those who are at ease in their own false security, who are following not after holiness, but after gold and worldly lusts and honours!

yea, who have even derided holiness! With all the honesty of which they boast, they are still upon the broad way.

What thousands never knew the road!
What thousands hate it when 'tis known!
None but the upright and sincere
Will seek or choose it for their own.

A thousand ways in ruin end;
One only leads to joys on high;
By that my willing steps ascend,
Pleased with a journey to the sky.

No more I ask, or hope to find
Delight or happiness below:
Sorrow may well possess the mind
That feeds where thorns and thistles grow.

The joy that fades is not for me;
I seek immortal joys above;
There glory without end shall be
The bright reward of faith and love.

APRIL 10.—*Lead us not into temptation.* Matt. vi. 13. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* 1 Cor. x. 13; Ps. lxvii. 2.

THE nearer to heaven, the higher the mountains, the deeper the valleys, and the sharper

the conflicts. But be not discouraged: it is only for the trial of our faith. God gives also more strength, carries us through all, as he has done from the beginning, and suffers none to be ashamed who trust in him. Sometimes we may seem to be tempted above measure, and are afraid of being confounded; but far from it: it is quite impossible that we should. Here thou hast the plain words of the Lord. Take hold on them, and wait his time; for since the world stood, none have been confounded in any thing who have waited for his promise; and surely he will not make thee the first instance of the failure of his word. (Phil. i. 10; Isa. liv. 10.) "Rather shall the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee."

Our God, how firm his promise stands,
E'en when he hides his face!
He trusts in our Redeemer's hands
His glory and his grace.

Then why, my soul, these sad complaints,
Since Christ and we are one?
Thy God is faithful to his saints,
Is faithful to his Son.

APRIL 11.—*Oh, satisfy us early with thy mercy.* Ps. xc. 14. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* Ps. lxxxi. 10. *My people shall be satisfied with my goodness.* Jer. xxxi. 14. *The river of God is full of water.* Ps. lxv. 9. *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.* Isa. xii. 3. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.* Zech. xii. 1.

O MY soul, keep close to the gospel: there only wilt thou find a fulness to supply all wants; food for the hungry, and raiment for the naked soul, and every thing in plenty. Whosoever will may come, and be fed and clothed without money and without price. Therefore, let not the law hinder thee from eating and drinking, and rejoicing and adorning thyself in the manner that becomes the gospel. The law, as one justly observes, brings in a great bill, but nothing wherewith to discharge it. It sets the soul a-working, but so as to neglect the proper nourishment necessary for it. No wonder, therefore, that she is destitute of sufficient strength,—that she faints, and never comes to the right mark. There is no such thing as making amends by the law. We must go directly to Christ, and receive first the grace and strength required, out of his fulness, by faith.

Dear dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.

April 12.—*Fear not, daughter of Zion.* John xii. 15. *Rejoice greatly, and shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation.* Zech. ix. 9. *For the Lord hath taken away thy judgments; he hath cast out thine enemy. The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.* Zeph. iii. 15. *Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather against thee shall fall for thy sake.* Isa. liv. 15. *Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.* Jer. xv. 19.

How strong soever thy spiritual enemies may be now, fear not, and be not discouraged. Thy King is bound, by his office, love, and promise, to help thee with strength to overcome. Even the hardships of a Christian work together for his good in this world, and brighten his crown of glory in the world to come. Too often, instead of casting and leaving a burden on the Lord by faith at once, we parley with temptation, and undertake to heal ourselves by a thousand false contrivances, the effect of which

is to make a conflict long that might have been short. (2 Chron. xvi. 7–9.) Lord, give me grace to be watchful, and to keep on the armour of faith, that, as I pass from conflict to conflict, I may pass on conquering and to conquer, daily pressing forward, and every hour rejoicing in Christ, my mighty King and Saviour.

Arise, ye saints, and sing;
Jesus your leader is;
The foe before his banner flies,
For victory is his.

April 13.—*Thou shalt not be afraid of them, but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh and unto all Egypt.* Deut. vii. 18. *Be ye not terrified because of them; for the Lord your God is he that goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, and to save you.* Deut. xx. 3, 4. *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.* Job xxxviii. 11.

The assaults of original sin will ever return; and we must not be surprised, when one conflict is over, that another arises. This warfare is unavoidable; for the enemy is within us. It makes us more careful and humble to know

this than we should be if we believed that we had to encounter sin only from without and not from within. A deep acquaintance with this subject will also teach us to put a just value on the privilege of drawing nigh to God through the Redeemer, and pleading those precious promises which encourage us to hope that he will both pardon and subdue our iniquities.

Released from guilt, I feel no fear:
Redemption is my shield and tower;
I see my Saviour ever near,
To help in every trying hour.

Though I am weak, and Satan strong
And often to assault me tries,
When Jesus is my strength and song,
Abash'd the wolf before me flies.

April 14.—*Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel the Saviour.* Isa. xlv. 15. *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.* Ps. xxv. 10. *The Lord of Hosts is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.* Isa. xxviii. 29.

God is wonderful in all his doings, and his ways are often past finding out; but, on the review of his dealings with us, we are compelled to acknowledge that even those which

once seemed the severest were the fruit of mercy. Therefore, when things take such a turn that we are quite at our wit's end and do not know which way to go, we may believe that the hand of the Lord is in it, and that some good will arise out of it at last. Such seasons may serve to remind us of the prediction, "He shall be called Wonderful," and to encourage the expectation that he will show himself to be our Counsellor and Mighty God also. At first every thing may seem to be against us and go quite contrary; but at last we shall see plainly that all the disappointments of our corrupt nature were intended to produce unspeakable advantage. Though the ways of God are marvellous, yet they are all capable of an explanation that will demonstrate them to be worthy of our highest praise.

Thy love is constant to its line,
Though clouds oft come between:
Oh, could my faith but pierce these clouds,
It might be always seen.

APRIL 15.—*Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* Isa. liii. 4, 5. *For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.* 1 Cor. v. 7.

WHILST we cherish an abiding sense of our own unworthiness, we should at the same time keep the eye of faith steadily fixed upon Jesus, the Lamb of God, and reckon ourselves to be justified through faith in him. So shall we be able to say, Our sins are forgiven, and the curse is taken away. We are accepted in Christ; and because we are in him there is no condemnation for us to fear. Thus shall we be kept in perfect peace. O Lord, help us, we are so slow to learn.

Ah, Lord, thy woes belong,
Thy cruel pains, to me;
The burden of my sin and wrong
Hath all been laid on thee.
Look on me where I kneel:
Wrath were my rightful lot:
One glance of love, oh, let me feel!
Redeemer, spurn me not!

APRIL 16.—*Remember me, O my God, for good.* Neh. xiii. 31. *Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him.* Jer. xxxi. 29. *A book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name.* Mal. iii. 16–18. *I know the thoughts which I have towards you.* Jer. xxix. 11.

As soon as I appear with my prayers before the Lord, he writes all my petitions in his book of remembrance. Should I not pray much? Yes, O Lord; and though I have many things already in thy book, yet will I give thee occasion to write down more and more every hour. Nothing can be forgotten. All will be granted by him. Delays we must expect; but all shall be made up with so much the larger gifts in due time, though the best will be reserved for a blissful eternity.

Now let the Lord my Saviour smile
And show my name upon his heart:
I would forget my pains a while,
And in the pleasure lose the smart.

Dear Lord, imprint upon thy breast,
And in the book of life, my name
I'd rather have it there impress'd
Than in the bright records of Fame.

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When the last fire burns all things here,
Those letters shall securely stand,
And in the Lamb's fair book appear,
Writ by the Eternal Father's hand.

April 17.—*Oh, remember not against us former iniquities* Ps. lxxix. 8. *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* Matt. vi. 12. *None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him.* Ezek. xxxiii. 16. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again; he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* Micah vii. 18, 19.

Every poor troubled soul that is yet distressed with the burden of sin ought to offer and urge this fifth petition. For in this petition he has forgiveness, and, indeed, the clearest assurance of forgiveness. He prays according to the will of God; and in the fact that though he be weak in grace he is still able to forgive his debtors, he has an evidence of his faith. So, by the blessing of God, this petition may raise us to the full assurance that we are in a gracious state. Who hath been the counsellor

of the Lord, or can prescribe the course God should pursue? He hath set forth Christ as the ground of my salvation. In him alone I trust; and the very anxiety of my soul to obtain pardon through his blood is an evidence, an assurance, that my faith is sincere.

Lord, through thy love alone we gain
The pardon of our sin:
The strictest life is but in vain;
Our works can nothing win.

Wherefore my hope is in the Lord;
My works I count but dust;
I build not there, but on his word,
And in his goodness trust.

APRIL 18.—*Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen.* Rev. ii. 5.

WHENEVER you halt or stumble, remember that unbelief is the great sin. So yield to it no longer, but bestir yourself; rise up, it may be in sincere sorrow, but so much the more in faith; and without delay, poor, weary soul, seek rest and strength in Jesus. Weak though you are, abide steadfast and immovable in him, that you may obtain help from him alone: so shall

you be well supplied. Lord, have mercy upon me! Let me often know and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that I have sinned against the Lord. Deliver me from presumptuous continuance in sin, and make me watchful and prayerful against it and against every thing that could seduce me to it.

Tell me no more of earthly toys,
Of sinful mirth and carnal joys,
(The things I loved before:)
Let me but view my Saviour's face
And feel his animating grace,
And I desire no more.

Tell me no more of praise and wealth,
Of careless ease and blooming health;
For they have all their snares:
Let me but know my sins forgiven
And see my name enroll'd in heaven,
And I am free from cares.

April 19.—*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee.* Gen. xix. 17. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Rev. ii. 10.

When a fire breaks out, every person hastens to extinguish it and to save whatever may be recovered. Oh that we were as much in earnest

to save our own souls and the souls of others from hell-fire! Oh that we might thus press on so as not to lose our crown! Lord, make us watchful, fervent, and faithful; deliver us from all languor and indifference and from every deceitful sin that would tempt us to go back from thee. Let my whole life be spent in following after thee and glorifying thy name.

Now act your part with manliness, and to your crown hold fast:
The ways of the backslider shall be overthrown at last.
As soldiers of the Lord of Hosts, fight faithfully and well,
And every day press nearer still to the heaven where you shall dwell.

Haste! save yourself from sinners, if you would not perish too;
Cast off sin's galling fetters; fly, as flies e hunted roe;
While Heaven offers peace, the Earth's a tyrant at the best:
So fly at once, that you may gain a home of endless rest.

Let nothing sinful clog your heart; fly at the dread alarm,
And let your life be hid in God, and naught shall do you harm.

APRIL 20.—*My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.* Prov. xxiiii. 26.

GIVE all to the Lord Jesus; that is, yield him your heart. Then every part of your duty will be easy and light, and all will be alike acceptable to him, whether you seek to glorify him in great things or in small things. Then you will always be able to say, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine, and his desire is towards me." (Canticles vi. 3, vii. 10.) Lord, art thou mine? What more can I desire? Am I thine? What can I withhold from thee?

Hast thou a rival in my breast?
Search, Lord, for thou canst tell
If aught can raise my passions thus
Or please my soul so well.

No! thou art precious to my heart,
My portion and my joy:
Forever let thy boundless grace
My sweetest thoughts employ.

When nature faints, around my bed
Let thy bright glories shine,
And Death shall all his terrors lose
In raptures so divine.

APRIL 21.—*If we believe not, yet he abideth* ***faithful:*** *he cannot deny himself.* 2 Tim. ii. 13; Isa. l. 7, 10, xlii. 3. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirs. after righteousness; for they shall be filled.* Matt. v. 6.

WHOEVER so hungers and thirsts, whoever calls upon the name of the Lord and flies to Christ as his refuge, he has a justifying faith already and is accepted, although he may not yet feel the joyful assurance of it. This assurance is indeed the fruit of such hungering and thirsting, although it does not always follow immediately, and may not always be enjoyed, being more or less disturbed by our conflicts with sin.

Canst thou thy faith not see?
Still yield not up to grief:
That hunger and that thirst in thee,
Through grace, make true belief.

Our blessed Lord had faith,
Even in his hour of woe:
God raised him o'er the power of death;
And he will save thee too.

The Saviour's faith is thine,
Since he believed for thee:
Through him God pardons all thy sin,
And he will set thee free.

On Christ, then, lay thy hand;
He is a faithful Lord:
On nothing earthly take thy stand,
But on God's holy word.

April 22.—*God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,* [*by grace ye are saved,*] *and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* Eph. ii. 4–6.

Christ being the Head of the body, his Church—all who are his real members—are, together with him, dead, buried, raised up, and seated in heavenly places; for he is the new Adam, and hath done all these things as our Representative, in our stead, and for our good. Therefore a true believer may rejoice, and say, "I have suffered in thee, O my glorious Head, for all my sins already: I am discharged; I have no punishment to fear any more respecting the guilt and curse of sin! Thou hast fully answered the charge against me; thou hast satisfied the infinite justice of God for me; and God is faithful and just to forgive me my sins, and to cleanse me from all unright-

eousness. Consequently, I die no more, since thou canst die no more: nay, I live already, and have my place with thee eternally in heaven, since the Head will not, cannot, part even with the weakest of his members, but will influence and draw them after him whithersoever he goeth."

He by himself hath sworn—
I on his oath depend—
I shall, on eagles' wings upborne,
To heaven ascend.
I shall behold his face,
I shall his power adore,
And sing the wonders of his grace
For evermore.

APRIL 23.—*He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* 2 Cor. v. 21. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* Rom. iv. 5.

THESE are very sweet and precious words to those who look upon their own best virtues and performances by nature as sinful, and upon their best condition by grace as extremely weak and imperfect. How comfortable a thing

is the justification of the penitent by faith, when the soul is first stripped quite naked before God and thoroughly convinced of its wickedness and weakness! A mere moral man does not meddle with this: he pretends to make amends for his former sins by altering his course and doing better works; but this is not making amends at all, since we are but unprofitable servants, and want continually forgiveness of sin, even when we have done all. There is but one way to be justified and to obtain and preserve the blessing of a good conscience, —which is, by humbling ourselves, confessing that we are guilty, and looking only for forgiveness and righteousness in Christ. Thus we are made, by him, the righteousness of God itself. May the Lord put us all in this way!

The best obedience of my hands
  Dares not appear before thy throne;
But faith can answer thy demands,
  By pleading what my Lord has done

APRIL 24.—*Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* Acts v. 31.

SAY not, "What reason have I for repentance? I am no murderer or robber." Thou art both. By thy sins thou hast murdered the Son of God, and by thy pride robbed God of his due service: therefore, if thy heart be not changed into a new one, repair at once to the throne of grace. It may be that Jesus Christ is even now awakening thee from the sleep of sin and about to bestow on thee repentance. He will assuredly change thy heart, and make thee a new man, if thou canst yield up thyself unto him. He stands at the door and knocks, saying, "If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him." Rev. iii. 20.

He who for men their surety stood,
And pour'd on earth his precious blood,
Pursues in heaven his mighty plan,
The Saviour and the Friend of man.

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye:
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.

Our fellow-Sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains,
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, his agonies and cries.

April 25.—*God is not the author of confusion.* 1 Cor xiv. 33. *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time. Also no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.* Eccles. iii. 11.

O Lord, I am like a little child, knowing neither the beginning nor end of my ways; but, thou being a Wonderful Counsellor, I think it my only wisdom to be advised and ruled by thee. Oh, show me, then, always thy way in all things, even in the least, that I may never fail to do thy work in due season and due order. Make me such a faithful steward as not to go one inch from thy will, but on all occasions to act and suffer according to thy good pleasure.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform:
He plants his footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill

He treasures up his bright designs
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

APRIL 26.—*Now, he who established us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; Eph. i. 14.

A SENSIBLE joy of faith, and great delight in prayer, are not the only evidences of the earnest and sealing of the Spirit: the former are sometimes wanting when we have reason to believe we are sealed by these marks; namely, when we receive Christ in all his offices and have a sincere desire to do the will of God in all things; when we love the ordinances of Christ, and regard the children of God with a brotherly affection and seek to do them good; when we hate sin and watch and

pray against it; and, lastly, when we are poor in spirit, vile in our own eyes, and are led into further acquaintance with Christ himself, and with his gospel, by the Spirit. These are constant marks, even for the weakest.

Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter, descend and bring
Some tokens of thy grace.

Dost thou not dwell in all the saints
And seal the heirs of heaven?
When wilt thou banish my complaints
And show my sins forgiven?

Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood,
And bear thy witness with my heart
That I am born of God.

April 27.—*God be merciful to me, a sinner.* Luke xviii. 13. *Look upon my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins.* Ps. xxv. 18. *The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, and of great mercy: the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.* Ps. cxlv. 8, 9. *Son, be of good cheer: thy sins are forgiven thee.* Matt. ix. 2.

Justification, or remission of sins before the tribunal of God, and the comfortable as-

surance of it in the heart, do not always go together. The pardon is passed in heaven at once and in the most perfect manner, yet the sense of it may be wanting; for the assurance of that pardon is mostly given by degrees, as believers are able to receive it. Feeble glimpses appear now and then; and many tokens usually pass between Christ and a believing soul before the Spirit gives a full and clear witness to his conscience. Therefore a penitent soul must converse much with the gospel, and pray continually for more light and a greater degree of faith and peace.

O God of mercy, hear my call;
My load of guilt remove;
Break down this separating wall
That bars me from my love.

Give me the presence of thy grace:
Then my rejoicing tongue
Shall speak aloud thy righteousness
And make thy praise my song.

A soul oppress'd with sin's desert
My God will ne'er despise;
An humble groan, a broken heart,
Is our best sacrifice.

April 28.—*Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desire of thine heart.* Ps. xxxvii. 4.

If thou desirest to delight thyself only in the Lord, and art more solicitous for the increase of faith, love, and holiness than temporal happiness, and wouldst even part with some earthly good, provided it would enlarge thy spiritual welfare, this comes not from nature, but is an infallible mark of grace and regeneration; and the Lord shall give thee also the desires of thine heart, and even more than thou desirest.

Nothing can be more foolish than to harbour one or more secret lusts in our heart after we have been once awakened. We must certainly suffer for it: our conscience will check us; we cannot enjoy it with half the pleasure as before; our course is hindered and our peace disturbed. How much more prudent and profitable, then, would it be to forsake all, and follow Christ, who only can satisfy the desires of our heart! Consider this, O my soul; act the wiser part: let thine eye be single, and cleave to him alone. While others, seeking to serve two masters, God and Mammon, are woefully disappointed at last, avoid thou this folly, and

be wholly for Christ. Thus thou wilt be able to taste the crystal streams of his heavenly love.

How vain are all things here below!
How false, and yet how fair!
Each pleasure has its poison too,
And every sweet a snare.

April 29.—*Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed.* Jer. xvii. 14. *I am the Lord that healeth thee.* Exod. xv. 25. *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.* Matt. ix. 12. *I have seen his ways, and will heal him.* Isa. lvii. 18, xliii. 3, and lxi. 1. *He healed all that were sick.* Matt. viii. 15–17.

Christ's healing all bodily sickness was a token of his power and grace to heal all spiritual diseases, though ever so desperate and dangerous. Therefore give thyself only up to his cure: he understands thy distemper and will certainly restore thee. He has healed a great many already—nay, all those who ever desired it—of all their infirmities. Thou canst never be too miserable for him: he is ever willing and able to help. The worse thy case is, the more he will pity thee and have patience. Before we can be made whole, his way is to

make us thoroughly sensible of our sickness and lay our wounds more and more open. But, as the physician then is most wanted, we must be the more earnest to implore his help; and he will surely bind us up again and heal us,—not at once, but by degrees, often slowly, yet at last completely: he will heal all our diseases. Ps. ciii. 3.

"Lord, why is this?" I trembling cried:
"Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?"
"'Tis in this way," the Lord replied,
"I answer prayer for grace and faith.

"These inward trials I employ
From self and pride to set thee free,
And break thy schemes of earthly joy
That thou mayst find thy all in me."

April 30.—*Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.* John xxi. 15.

When we discern and appreciate the Divine perfections of Christ,—when we trust with our whole heart in him,—then only can we experience this love. The centre of the circle must stand fast if the other parts are to move properly: so faith must be fixed and immovable in

Christ, in his righteousness, grace, and love, if love to Jesus and sanctification of life are to make any progress in us. He, however, who does not advance, who comes to a stand in the work of sanctification, has neither peace, nor assurance, nor strength to walk in love. Lord, lead me upon the path of faith and love. Amen.

Blest Jesus, when my soaring thoughts
O'er all thy graces rove,
Now is my soul in transport lost,
In wonder, joy, and love!

Not softest strains can charm mine ears,
Like thy belovéd name,
Nor aught beneath the skies inspire
My heart with equal flame.

Where'er I look, my wondering eyes
Unnumber'd blessings see:
But what is life, with all its bliss,
If once compared to thee?

MAY.

MAY 1.—*Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant.* Ps. cxliii. 2. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my voice, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.* John v. 24, viii. 51; Isa. xxv. 8.

SINCE the Judge himself is our Brother, our Bridegroom, the Lord of death and life,—yea, even our life,—believers cannot die eternally, because they are passed from death unto life. He who owns the justice of God's judgment, confesses himself guilty in all things, and appeals from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat, him the Lord will own and justify through the righteousness of his Son. For, "if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." Nay, we should even sit in judgment together with Christ, (1 Cor. vi. 2;) and surely in that day we shall not pass a sentence of condemnation on ourselves: much less will Christ, for he loves us more than we do ourselves.

Who shall tne Lord's elect condemn?
'Tis God that justifies their souls;
And mercy, like a mighty stream,
O'er all their sins divinely rolls.

Who shall adjudge the saints to hell?
'Tis Christ that suffer'd in their stead?
And, their salvation to fulfil,
Behold him rising from the dead.

MAY 2.—*Give heed to me, Lord.* Jer. xviii. 19. *Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* Ps. cxxi. 4. *Casting all your care upon God; for he careth for you.* 1 Peter v. 7.

THE care of the Lord, which he takes for his little ones, infinitely exceeds the care of the most tender mother over her weak and helpless child. Then, while I feel and own myself weak, foolish, and wretched, the Lord being the Guardian of such babes, he will have patience with me. Knowing myself, therefore, to be always a weak and ignorant child, I will labour to keep close to Jesus, in waiting and prayer. And, since he is the Minister of the Sanctuary, he will never let me want any thing that is good for me, but will defend me, and feed me, and train me up in the best and most suitable manner.

Fierce passions discompose the mind,
As tempests lash the sea:
But calm content and peace we find
When, Lord, we trust to thee.

In vain by reason and by rule
We try to bend the will;
For none but in the Saviour's school
Can learn the heavenly skill.

Since at his feet I've pray'd to wait,
And all his will to bear,
Contented with my present state,
I cast on Him my care.

MAY 3.—*The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.* Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

IN a word, God is Love; and who shall separate us from the love of Christ? In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (1 John iv. 16; Rom. viii. 35–37.) O Lord, shed abroad thy love in my heart by the Holy Ghost, that I may delight myself in thee, that I may love thee with my whole mind and strength, and that whatever I do may be done in thy name and out of love

and gratitude to thee. O Lord, this has long been the desire of my heart, and thou wilt not deny my petition. No: my prayer shall be answered.

Lord, at thy feet I prostrate fall;
Oppress'd with fears, to thee I call:
Reveal thy pardoning love to me,
And set my captive spirit free.

Hast thou not said, "Seek ye my face"?
The invitation I embrace:
I'll seek thy face. Thy Spirit give!
Oh, let me see thy face and live.

I'll seek his face with cries and tears,
With secret sighs and fervent prayers;
And, if not heard, I'll waiting sit.
And perish at my Saviour's feet.

But canst thou, Lord, see all my pain,
And bid me seek thy face in vain?
No! Jesus will not, can't, deceive:
The soul that seeks his face shall live.

MAY 4.—*In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.* Ps. lxxi. 1. *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of Hosts, be ashamed for my sake; let not those that seek thee be confounded*

for my sake, O God of Israel. Ps. lxix. 6. *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* Luke xxii. 32.

MANY a man is ready to say, "Yes, I have faith, and I would certainly be very far advanced as a Christian if my life were only as good as my faith." But observe this: If the good tree—that is, faith—were really in you, then the good fruit—a godly life—would follow as a matter of course. A mere historical faith will not answer the purpose. If it were such an easy, ordinary thing to believe, where would be the necessity of Christ's intercession that we may have faith,—a faith that will not fail? O Lord Jesus, pray also for me, that I may have faith,—a faith that will hold out till the end.

Lead me, Jesus, ever lead me;
Let me ne'er from thee depart;
Be my Shepherd; tend and feed me;
Let no sin ensnare my heart.

Be my Rock, my Rock; defend me
From the world's deriding race;
Courage in my trials send me,
For in thee my hopes I place.

Let not Satan e'er deceive me;
Let my heart and life be one,
One in thee: then never leave me,
Leave me not, or I'm undone.

MAY 5.—*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* Ps. xc. 12.

HE that does not consider his latter end is not truly wise. Though he may possess stores of the learning of earth and be well versed in the deep things of this world, he is nevertheless a fool. But this ability to number our days can be obtained only by prayer. Oh, seek it, implore it quickly; for the art of dying is not so easily learned.

From thee would I the lesson learn
That dust shall unto dust return,
That I may watchful be.
My fleeting days, how soon they're o'er!
They go, and they come back no more,
Still bearing nearer to the shore
Of vast eternity.

So let me spend each day in fear,
That when my final hour draws near
My soul be not oppress'd.

Oh, when in death I'm sharply tried,
Let me remember thou hast died,
In thee find all my wants supplied,
In thee find peace and rest.

When to the grave my footsteps tend,
Let thy good Spirit be my friend,
My way be through thy blood.
Thy word my sure defence shall be;
Thy cross, my staff, shall comfort me;
My rest, when I go wearily,
Shall be thy heart, my God!

MAY 6.—*O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* Ps. xxxv. 11. *Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* Rom. v. 20. *For God will abundantly pardon.* Isa. iv. 7.

IT is all one with God to forgive a repenting sinner his trespasses, whether great or small, many or few; for they are all atoned for with one ransom. No sin, properly speaking, is little in itself; and none is greater than the grace of God and the infinite price laid down for it. Whatever sins, therefore, a man feels, yet he may throw himself upon the abounding grace of God. This grace must also be our comfort, depend upon it alone, even when it is

best with us; for then only it is best with us when we depend alone on grace, and live in it, as in our element.

Why does your face, ye humble souls,
These mournful colours wear?
What doubts are these, that waste your faith
And nourish your despair?

What though your numerous sins exceed
The stars that fill the skies,
And, aiming at the eternal throne,
Like pointed mountains rise?

See, here an endless ocean flows
Of never-failing grace;
Behold, a dying Saviour's veins
The sacred flood increase?

It rises high, and drowns the hills,
Has neither shore nor bound:
Now, if we search to find our sins,
Our sins can ne'er be found.

MAY 7.—*Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.* Ps. vi. 2. *And strengthen me with strength in my soul.* Ps. cxxxviii. 3. *My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.* 2 Cor. xii. 9. *The Lord delighteth not in the strength of a horse; he*

taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11. *The Lord will give strength unto his people.* Ps. xix. 11.

In whatever part we are weak and most beset by corrupted nature, we may yet be strong enough, through grace, to come off conquerors. Therefore hope against hope, and despair not of overcoming by the power of God, be thy corruptions within and thine enemies without ever so strong and obstinate. I am weak indeed, but Christ is strong; I am poor, he is rich; I am sick, he is the Physician; I am a sinner, he is the Saviour of sinners: consequently, he suits me, and I suit him. But let me look to him daily, seek his face earnestly and grace to help in every time of need.

Let me but hear my Saviour say,
"Strength shall be equal to thy day;"
Then I rejoice in deep distress,
Leaning on all-sufficient grace.

I glory in infirmity,
That Christ's own power may rest on me:
When I am weak, then I am strong;
Christ is my shield, and Christ my song.

I can do all things, or can bear
All sufferings, if my Lord be there;
Sweet pleasures mingle with the pains,
While his kind hand my head sustains.

MAY 8.—*Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak* Ps. vi. 2. *Fear thou not; let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty: he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy: he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.* Zeph. iii. 16, 17. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* Isa. ix. 6; Luke ii. 10–14.

LORD, art thou also Mighty in me, my Counsellor, my Prince of Peace, yea, all in all to my soul? What more can I desire? Wherefore should I fear? With thee on my side, why should I not come off more than a conqueror? No one is too vile and helpless for thee to deliver him, no enemy so strong as to prevail against thee! Bless the Lord, O my soul.

To us a child is born,
And Wonderful his name,
The Counsellor, The Prince of Peace,
The Mighty God, the same.

He comes our souls to save,
Though we were lost in sin;
He comes to triumph o'er the grave
And bring redemption in.

Until our days shall close,
We'll sing our joyful songs:
To Him who conquers all our foes,
To him all praise belongs.

MAY 9.—*Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.* Ps. xxvii. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.* Ps. lxxxvi. 11. *Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.* Ps. xxv. 8, 12.

O LORD, be pleased to fulfil this gracious promise in me also. Thou hast inclined my heart to do thy will, and yet I am often in darkness about thy will. Here it is written, "Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way." It is thine own word: I may depend upon it, and would plead it with thee: many times thou hast fulfilled this promise already, and thou art willing and able to do it evermore. Thou art ever mindful

of thy word, and I would keep close unto it. Then let thy Spirit well explain thy word and write it on my heart, enabling me to understand, to love, and to practise it.

I lift my soul to God;
My trust is in his name:
Let not my foes, that seek my blood,
Still triumph in my shame.

Sin and the powers of hell
Persuade me to despair:
Lord, let me know thy covenant well,
That I may 'scape the snare.

MAY 10.—*Turn again our captivity, O Lord.* Ps. cxxvi. 4. *He hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.* Isa. lxi. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, I will give thee for a covenant of the people, that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves: they shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places, they shall not hunger nor thirst.* Isa. xlix. 8–10. See also chap. xxxv. 10.

O LORD, I am hungering after the righteousness and freedom, not only of faith, but of holiness also; not that I may make holiness

the foundation of hope, but the evidence of faith; and that I may be able to rejoice, and take the comfort of thy righteousness alone, without deceiving my soul. Grant, therefore, that I may be truly filled, and may be strong, easy, and free, so as to be kept no longer in the bonds of pride, unbelief, an upbraiding conscience, or a worldly heart.

Jesus beholds where Satan reigns,
Binding his slaves in heavy chains;
He sets the prisoners free, and breaks
The iron bondage from our necks.

Poor helpless worms in thee possess
Grace, wisdom, power, and righteousness;
Thou art our mighty ALL; and we
Give our whole selves, O Lord, to thee.

MAY 11.—*How long wilt thou hide thy face from me, O Lord?* Ps. xlii. 1. *For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee: for this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should*

no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. Isa. liv. 7–9.

When the Lord is pleased to quicken us in our prayers with a lively impression of one or more promises, we are apt to think that the hour of his help is come. But afterwards, it may be, he not only hides himself for a great while again, but things take such a strange and contrary course as if all had been nothing, or as if nothing was more uncertain than the word of God,—nay, even God himself. But Christians must then be prudently upon their guard, not without the pleasing expectation that God is going to do some glorious things for them; for, if they be first more convinced of their utter unworthiness,—if they act with faith and patience, and be more earnest in prayer,—they will afterwards receive more abundant favour.

How boundless is our Father's grace,
In height, in depth, in length!
He made his Son our righteousness.
His Spirit is our strength.

MAY 12.—*How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?* Ps. xiii. 1. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands: thy walls are continually before me.* Isa. xlix. 15, 16. *I will not leave you comfortless.* John xiv. 18.

WERE all our sins and afflictions so soon to be prayed away with a few words, whence these sad and repeated complaints of David? Why should God advise us to wait for him and persevere in hope? And how could faith and patience be exercised? In our closets we may be lifted up with high speculations, seem to be strong and able to leap over all the walls; but in great distress we see how dejected and distrusting our hearts often are, (Ps. xxx. 7, 8;) but the Lord preserves us.

Can a woman's tender care
Cease towards the child she bare?
Yes, she may forgetful be;
Yet will I remember thee!

Mine is an unchanging love,—
Higher than the heights above;
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done,—
Partner of my throne shalt be:
Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou me?

MAY 13.—*Show me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths.* Ps. xxv. 4. *Show me now thy way, that I may know thee.* Exod. xxxiii. 13. *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.* Ps. xxxii. 8. *My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.* Exod. xxxiii. 14.

O LORD, suffer me not to step aside in the least from thy way, much less to fall away from thee, the true Supporter of my soul, by the folly of my own imagination. May I never run before thou hast called me, to the hurt of my soul, but constantly and confidently abide in thee, always drawing the necessary light and strength from thee by never-ceasing supplications! Grant that, mine eye being fixed continually upon thee, I may be guided into all truth, my doings be attended with thy blessing, and my whole life be a constant progress towards heaven.

CHRIST'S ANSWER.

"I will keep thee as the apple of mine eye,

that no evil shall come near thee. As a careful mother watches over her child, so have I undertaken to teach thee my path and guide thee with mine own eyes. Whatever faintings and failings may befall thee, yet will I be ever faithful, raising thee up again and leading thee evermore in my ways. Nay, as a good shepherd, I will carry thee in my own arms whenever thine increasing weakness shall require."

MAY 14.—*As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* 1 Peter ii. 2.

NEW-BORN babes must not self-conceitedly be desirous of high things and strong meat. Such have more need experimentally to understand the first oracles of Christ and taste the milk and saving power of the gospel. This would best make them grow in grace and wean them from the world. A sucking child esteems nothing else in comparison of its mother's breast; and those that delight more in lofty imaginations than the Bible do not proceed in a right spirit, and will therefore find it necessary to retrace their steps and learn over again the first principles of religion. The nearer

Christians approach their end, the more they walk in deep humility and godly simplicity, placing themselves on the lowest bench of weak and little children. Thus they become the fittest vessels of grace; they will certainly be enlightened and have the mystery of Christ revealed in their hearts. Matt. xi. 25.

Father, 'tis thus, because thy will
Chose and ordain'd it should be so:
'Tis thy delight to abase the proud
And lay the haughty scorner low.

MAY 15.—*And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Watch ye, therefore, and pray.* Luke xxi. 34, 36. *Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.* 1 Peter iv. 8.

WE should ever be watchful against indulging in the love of the things of the world. If the heart be ensnared by any vanity, it is impossible to pray aright, and we know not the peace of God. That peace is destroyed even when our thoughts dwell fondly upon any worldly pleasure, much more when we eagerly follow after it. Therefore often retire to be alone

with Christ, to taste the riches of his grace and to cast yourself upon his arms. This will be an effectual protection against the love of the world; it will keep your heart in peace, and make you fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Lord, help us; keep us close to thy side, and deliver us from the love of the things of the world.

When I eat, or when I drink,
  When I sleep, or when I wake,
Still would I of Jesus think,
  And do all for his name's sake.

When the hours of labour come,
  May I strong and active be!
And, wherever I may roam,
  Lord, do thou remember me.

MAY 16.—*Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast caused me to hope. I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* Ps. cxix. 11, 38, and verses 6, 32, 49.

THE comforts of the gospel sweetly and powerfully urge us to obedience, and the ter-

rors of the law warn us against resting on that obedience. Both, therefore, are needful. Whosoever despises or neglects obedience entertains a false notion of the gospel, and is running headlong into licentiousness and ruin. And he who relies on his obedience to justify him defeats the design of the gospel, and frustrates the grace of God, making it of no effect. May the Lord lead and keep us in the right way!

Laden with guilt and full of fears,
I fly to thee, my Lord,
And not a glimpse of hope appears
But in thy written word.

This is the Judge that ends the strife
Where wit and reason fail,—
My guide to everlasting life,
Through all this gloomy vale.

Oh, may thy counsel, mighty God,
My roving feet command,
Nor I forsake the happy road
That leads to thy right hand!

MAY 17.—*Through the law I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:*

and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Gal. ii. 19, 20.

CHRIST being our Head, in whom all fulness dwells, he will certainly fill all his members with life and strength, according to his promise, (John xiv. 19,) "I live, and ye shall live also," (and chap. xvii. 3,) "This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." To know Christ, and God in Christ, is true light and life: he that has this has enough. Oh, the excellency of the knowledge of Christ! Lord, teach me to know thee as the Bridegroom of my soul, that the law may not rush into my conscience, now thy bride-chamber, and condemn me any more. I desire to be devoted to thee alone. (Rom. vii.4.) Grant, therefore, that my whole heart and life, all my words and actions, may be governed only by a living faith in thee, who hast loved me and given thyself for me.

Come, dearest Lord, descend and dwell,
By faith and love, in every breast:
Then shall we know and taste and feel
The joys that cannot be express'd.

Come, fill our hearts with inward strength;
Make our enlargéd souls possess
And learn the height and breadth and length
Of thine immeasurable grace.

MAY 18.—*I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.* Ps. cxix. 22. *I know thy poverty; but thou art rich.* Rev. ii. 9. *Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Matt. v. 3. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live forever.* Ps. xxii. 26. *The Lord healeth the broken in heart; the Lord lifteth up the meek.* Ps. cxlvii. 3, 6. *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.* Matt. xii. 20.

SUCH are the tender mercies of Christ towards the weakest of his people that he supplies them from time to time with all strength, till at last they are able to gain a complete victory. As soon, therefore, as we are sensible of our poverty or miserable condition, and are desirous of grace and strength to overcome sin, evidencing that desire to be sincere by constant prayer, we have actually some grace and spiritual life, and are delivered already from the jaws of hell; for there is no such feeling in

dead souls; and in hell there is only a desire to be delivered from the punishment of sin, but not from sin itself.

Bless'd are the humble souls that see
Their emptiness and poverty;
Treasures of grace to them are given
And crowns of joy laid up in heaven.

Bless'd are the men of broken heart,
Who mourn for sin with inward smart;
The blood of Christ divinely flows,
A healing balm for all their woes.

MAY 19.—*I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* John viii. 12. *Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.* John xii. 35.

HE that is faithful, keeping ever close to Christ and his light, strictly watching and obeying the motions of his Spirit, will be always tender in conscience and will receive proportionate measures of light: consequently he will be from time to time more deeply rooted in repentance, faith, and assurance, so as either to be preserved from many combats and disorders, or, at least, to be carried sooner through

the same. He may meet with dark valleys in his pilgrimage; for nature is covered with darkness, and grace sometimes only glimmers like a spark; yet by degrees it will blaze, and at last break through and enlighten all our darkness.

Is he a Sun? His beams are grace;
His course is joy and righteousness:
Nations rejoice when he appears
To chase the clouds and dry their tears.

Nor earth, nor seas, nor sun, nor stars,
Nor heaven, his full resemblance bears:
His beauties we can never trace
Till we behold him face to face.

Oh, let me climb those higher skies,
Where storms and darkness never rise!
There he displays his powers abroad,
And shines and reigns, th' incarnate God.

MAY 20.—*I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.* Isa. xlviii. 17, 18. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any*

man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Rev. iii. 20.

How often and how variously does the Lord knock at the door of our hearts,—by the voice of his word, of his Spirit, or of conscience! But how seldom are we inclined to give him the hearing! We are often so distracted with business or pleasure that we can hardly observe his voice, amidst the hurry and noise of worldly things, and we are not at home when he knocks and seeks to take up his abode with us. Even now he is knocking. Hearken to his voice, and open the door for him directly, since he desires nothing from us that is unreasonable, but intends to make our heart a glorious residence and banqueting-room of love, fill it with heavenly treasure, and give us every thing along with himself.

I'll bring him to my mother's home;
Nor does my Lord refuse to come
To Zion's sacred chambers, where
My soul first drew the vital air.

He gives me there his bleeding heart,
Pierced for my sake with deadly smart:
I give my soul to him, and there
Our loves their mutual tokens share.

MAY 21.—*I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman: every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Abide in me, and I in you: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.* John xv. 1–5.

O LORD, I trust that this word will have its accomplishment in me also,—though as yet I have great reason to be humbled on account of my barrenness. Grant, therefore, that I may always abide in thee faithfully and quietly, since there is every thing in thy power, and nothing can be done by my own strength, but as it is thy will and it tends both to the glory of thy Father and thine own. I depend upon being replenished, in due season, with fruits of righteousness. Oh, suffer nothing in me which may dishonour thy name, and which would prove hurtful to myself and offensive to others. But, whatever thou judgest fit for me to suffer, let it work for my real good.

How can I sufficiently adore the patience of the Lord, my gracious Husbandman, who still bears with me, the weakest of all his branches? He has not cut me off yet, but still employs means to make me more fruitful,—though, like a degenerate plant, I have yielded little else

but wild grapes. Why, then, shouldst thou murmur, O my soul, at the application of his pruning-knife? It is really for thy good. He is angry only with the degenerate, unfruitful branches. The more these are pruned, the more fruit thou shalt bring forth.

MAY 22.—*I am glorified in them. I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* John xvii. 10, 26, 23.

OH, glorious promise! How could he love us more? What blessed and intimate union is this! Oh for such a faith as could always truly believe it! Christ is the Vine, believers are the branches; he the Bridegroom, they the bride; he the Head, they the members of his body, of his very flesh and bones, and, consequently, one body with him. And who ever hated his own flesh? In loving and cherishing believers, he loves himself. (Eph. v. 28, 29.) Whenever he shall cease to love himself, then, and no sooner, will he cease to cherish them also. It is his own delight to do them good,

more than the mother's to protect and nourish her child.

Lord, what a heaven of saving grace
Shines through the beauties of thy face
And lights our passions to a flame!
Lord, how we love thy charming name!

When I can say, My God is mine,
When I can feel thy glories shine,
I tread the world beneath my feet
And all that earth calls good and great.

Send comforts down from thy right hand
While we pass through this barren land,
And in thy temple let us see
A glimpse of love, a glimpse of thee.

MAY 28.—*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* Matt. xi. 28, 29.

HERE Christ is commending his own meekness, both as a pattern for imitation and as an encouragement for heavy-laden sinners to draw near to him with confidence. Rest is promised, not for the merit of our labour and humility, but merely for our coming to him and believ

ing in him. He says, "Take my yoke upon you." "But how shall I take it?" says the sinner. "Learn of me," says the Saviour. "Let me be your Teacher; and though you are blind and foolish, fretful and forgetful, yea, wholly polluted with sin, I can yet bear with you, because I am meek and lowly in heart; not rough and haughty to offenders, as Pharisees usually are, but full of compassion towards them, willing to receive them, and ready to forgive and comfort them." Come therefore to him, O sinner, with all thy loads of sin and misery: he will in no wise cast thee out, but will receive thee gladly.

Bless'd is the man whose shoulders take
My yoke and bear it with delight:
My yoke is easy to his neck,
My grace shall make the burden light.

Jesus, we come at thy command,—
With faith, and hope, and humble zeal.
Resign our spirits to thy hand,
To mould and guide us at thy will.

MAY 24.—*I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant.* Ps. cxix. 176. *Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out. I will seek that*

which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 16. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs in his arm and carry them in his bosom.* Isa. xl. 11.

He that is wise in his own conceit, as philosophers often are, does not pray, like David, to be sought after and healed by Jesus Christ; and therefore he continues, amidst all his boasted wisdom, deeply ignorant of his fallen nature and his ruined state. But, as thou hast given me, O thou good Shepherd, to understand my lost and helpless condition, and that, like a wandering sheep, I can neither find myself when lost nor advise myself how to return, I beseech thee to seek, heal, lead, feed, carry, and strengthen me also, as my various necessities require; that I may be able to say, with David, "The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall not want."

My Shepherd will supply my need:
Jehovah is his name:
In pastures fresh he makes me feed,
Beside the living stream.

He brings my wandering spirit back
When I forsake his ways,

And leads me, for his mercy's sake,
In paths of truth and grace.

The sure provisions of my God
Attend me all my days:
Oh, may thy house be mine abode
And all my work be praise!

MAY 25.—*I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant.* Gen. xxxii. 10. *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* 2 Sam. vii. 18.

A SOUL truly humbled highly esteems every favour, and judges itself utterly unworthy of the least, looking upon every thing as a free gift and bestowed only for Jesus Christ's sake. Now, O my Father, in myself I certainly deserve none—no, not the least—of thy mercies; but as thou hast graciously looked upon me, and given me thine only Son, who hath purchased all blessing at a high price for sinners, I do believe that goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life. Be it so, holy Father, to thy glory and my everlasting joy.

Not for our duties or deserts,
  But of his own abounding grace,
He works salvation in our hearts
  And forms a people for his praise.

'Twas his own purpose that begun
  To rescue rebels doom'd to die:
He gave us grace in Christ his Son
  Before he spread the starry sky.

Jesus, the Lord, appears at last,
  And makes his Father's councils known,
Declares the great transactions past,
  And brings immortal blessings down.

MAY 26.—*I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.* Rom. xii. 1, 2.

THE presenting of our bodies a living sacrifice unto God, when attended with serious prayer and reading the Scriptures, is the best means of knowing the will of God. To neglect this, and use other means, is tempting God and exposing ourselves to the temptations and siftings of the Wicked One. We may think

ourselves to be divinely convinced, by faith, of the will of God, though we follow our own imaginations and spoil the best of our actions. Self-will generally takes quick resolutions and has a great deal of assurance; whereas God very often leads his people by a way which they know not, and takes methods quite different from those which they would have adopted. "He that believeth shall not make haste." (Isa. xxviii. 16.) Let every one be careful that he does not mistake self-will and plausible representations for Divine convictions and assurances of faith, and strictly examine himself first, whether his body, soul, will, and affections are entirely offered up to the good will and pleasure of God; for God requires the service of the whole man, even a sacrificing of our whole selves to him at all times, not only at church, but in all other places,—that we do not conform to the world, but be daily transformed by the renewing of our minds.

MAY 27.—*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe*

of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. Isa. lxi. 10.

In vain dost thou adorn thyself, O my soul, before thou approachest Christ. To him thou must come, not glorying in thy presumed comeliness, but expecting all thine attire and dignity from him. The very best of our robes need to be washed in the blood of Christ, (Rev. vii. 14,) and it is by faith in his atonement and righteousness that the holiest of men are justified before his heavenly Father. The fruits of this faith are the evidences that our names are written in heaven.

Awake, my heart; arise, my tongue;
Prepare a tuneful voice:
In God, the life of all my joys,
Aloud will I rejoice.

'Tis he adorn'd my naked soul
And made salvation mine;
Upon a poor polluted worm
He makes his grace to shine.

The Spirit wrought my faith and love,
And hope, and every grace;
But Jesus spent his life to work
The robe of righteousness.

MAY 28.—*I have sinned against the Lord. The Lord also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die.* 2 Sam. xii. 13. *For, if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.* 1 Cor. xi. 31.

HE that with unfeigned repentance accuses and judges himself, placing no dependence on works of righteousness which he may have done, but looking to the mercy of God through his dear Son, may expect to receive forgiveness of all his sins at once, though chastisement may follow. For pardons are not bestowed in various measures, as spiritual gifts are. God, through Christ, receives the whole person of a penitent sinner into his favour, forgiving both original and actual sins in one instant; so that either none or all are forgiven. But, though repentance is needful to humble a sinner and to bring him to Christ, yet no sins are forgiven on account of this repentance, but through faith alone, in the blood of Christ. This fountain washes away the guilt of all sins, though ever so numerous and heinous. For it is written, "The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7.

Show pity, Lord! O Lord, forgive!
Let a repenting rebel live!

Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

My lips with shame my sins confess
Against thy law, against thy grace,
Lord, should thy judgments grow severe,
I am condemn'd, but thou art clear.

MAY 29.—*Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.* Rev. ii. 4.

MY Father, I can calmly rest in this,—that thou art gracious and merciful to me in Jesus Christ my Lord. But my heart is often so distressed when I think of the coldness of my love to thee! Oh, come and supply my deficiencies, and what may yet be lacking lay not to my charge. Let not my short comings entirely quench the spirit of childlike confidence in me. Let them rather serve to encourage me to trust the more heartily in Christ and in thy grace alone,—to be more importunate in prayer, that I may find all I need in thee, and especially be immovably established in thy love.

My soul, has Jesus bid thee "come"?
Forget not thy First Love:

Though many, many from him roam,
Hold fast, nor with them move.

Hast thou ere this begun to stray?
At once in prayer be bold,
At once, my soul! make no delay;
Be not so cold, so cold!

When first he call'd, thou wast so blest;
Thou shouldst be happier now:
The nearer to the marriage-feast,
Love should the brighter glow.

MAY 30.—*I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait.* Ps. cxxx. 5. *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.* Isa. xl. 31. *For the Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.* Lam. iii. 25.

WHEN we have prayed, we must remember to wait also; for this is well pleasing to the Lord and expressly commanded by him. The more we wait, and the more instant we are in prayer, so much more will he give. Nay, he always hears and grants our petitions directly, though he often lays up the enjoyment of the answer till his infinite wisdom determine that

the fittest time is arrived. Therefore we may confidently say, Such and such gifts I shall have, since I have prayed for them: they are actually laid up for me; and the use and benefit thereof I shall reap in due season, especially in death and in eternity.

My spirit looks to God alone;
My rock and refuge is his throne:
In all my fears, in all my straits,
My soul on his salvation waits.

Trust him, ye saints, in all your ways;
Pour out your hearts before his face:
When helpers fail and foes invade,
God is our all-sufficient aid.

For sovereign power reigns not alone;
Grace is a partner of his throne:
Thy grace and justice, mighty Lord,
Shall well divide our last reward.

MAY 31.—*In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.* Ps. xciv. 19. See also 2 Cor. i. 3–5.

A CONVERTED man, without afflictions, is apt to place his trust and seek his comforts in temporal things. Earthly desires crowd upon him, filling his soul with vanity; and he cannot

well taste the sweet comforts of God's word but under the burden of the cross. Here we often enjoy more solid rest than if we were without a cross; and then Jesus Christ verifies his declaration, (Matt. xi. 30,) "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Thus our hearts are set against the world, reconciled to heavenly things, and easily separated from many idols which we could not forsake before. Well, then, may we bear these salutary burdens, which, when sanctified, will produce present comfort and soon issue in eternal rest and glory. And, since the Lord has promised to give strength sufficient for the day, that we may not be tempted above measure, there is abundant reason to acknowledge that his burden is light indeed.

'Tis good for me to wear the yoke,
For pride is apt to rise and swell;
'Tis good to bear my Father's stroke,
That I might learn his statutes well.

Father, I bless thy gentle hand:
How kind is thy chastising rod,
That forced my conscience to a stand
And brought my wandering soul to God!

JUNE.

JUNE 1.—*I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* 1 Cor. ii. 2. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.* Ps. cxi. 10. *The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.* James iii. 17. *Knowledge puffeth up; but charity edifieth.* 1 Cor. viii. 1.

CHRIST crucified, and he alone, is the power and wisdom of God: all Christians, and especially divines, should make it their particular practice to study it well. Were our faith built on human wisdom, then surely the shrewdest philosophers would be the greatest believers; whereas they are sometimes the worst infidels. The wisdom which is from above delights to dwell with the lowly and babes, who pray for it earnestly. (Prov. xi. 2; Matt. xi. 25.) What would all knowledge avail us, then, without the knowledge of Christ? One spark of pure love yields more power than all the stores of empty human learning. May the Lord Jesus

shed his love abroad in my heart! him have I determined to know, and him only: the knowledge of his love, as exemplified on the cross, I account my greatest wisdom and glory.

Grace, wisdom, justice, join'd and wrought
The wonders of that day!
Nor mortal tongue nor mortal thought
Can equal thanks repay.

Our hymns should sound like those above,
Could we our voices raise:
Yet, Lord, our hearts should all be love,
And all our lives be praise.

JUNE 2.—*I will not let thee go except thou bless me.* Gen. xxxii. 26. *Forsake me not, O Lord my God.* Ps. xxxviii. 21. *Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.* Gen. xxviii. 15. *I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.* Exod. xxxiii. 12. *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* Heb. xiii. 5.

GOD will have me to be faithful; and will not he be so himself? Am I to trust in his word? Then surely he will not forsake me, but will graciously fulfil his word. Heaven and earth must pass away, but his word will not.

He is ever faithful. If I do not believe this, I derogate from the character of God, and can have no help nor comfort from his word; but, if I truly believe him to be faithful, I believe enough. This is what he requires; and, if I really comply, my faith will not be moved, even in the hottest trials: the word will hold me up, though I receive it even in weakness. But my faith must be attended with continual prayer.

Tell of his wondrous faithfulness,
And sound his power abroad;
Sing the sweet promise of his grace,
And the performing God.

Engraved as in eternal brass,
The mighty promise shines;
Nor can the powers of darkness rase
Those everlasting lines.

JUNE 3.—*I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.* Matt. xii. 36. See also Eph. iv. 29, v. 4.

HERE all corrupt communication, jesting, foolish talking, and whatever is not convenient and good to the use of edifying, are plainly forbidden. But who truly believes the report

and the truth of these awful words? Surely the world does not believe them at all: this is quite plain, from the very common and shocking practice of reviling, lying, swearing, jesting, and talking all manner of filthiness. Even religious people do not sufficiently believe and consider these important subjects. How many heedless, slanderous, idle, and unprofitable words do they occasionally utter! Be therefore careful, O my reader, to weigh every word, and to make light of none; for such will increase thine account. Whenever thou art going to speak, let the question be first, Is it needful to speak? Does it tend to the glory of God? Will it profit me or others? O Lord, grant that never an idle word may drop from my lips. Whenever I am to converse with others, give me grace first to converse with thee by secret prayer. In all companies, let thy presence be before mine eyes; let me always look upon thee as the chief Person in the place and receive direction when and what I am to speak. May thy good Spirit always teach me and sanctify all my thoughts and words!

JUNE 4.—*I will be sorry for my sin. For I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me.* Ps. xxxviii. 18, li. 3. *He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* Ps. ciii. 10–13.

Is my sin ever before me? Surely my atonement is likewise ever before God, and before me also. God has already settled the account of my sins with my Saviour; and therefore he will no more enter into judgment with me. His justice as well as his faithfulness move him now to save me, (1 John i. 9,) and not to enforce the sentence of the law a second time, since I can now come before him with the complete redemption and the atoning sacrifice of Christ. My sin is taken away, I am free from condemnation forever, through Jesus Christ my Lord; my conscience finds perfect peace in him. (Heb. ix. 14, x. 2, 22.) The terrors of the law shall distress me no more; for I am safe and at peace behind the shield of faith.

Lord, write upon my heart how thou dost take
No reckoning of them who, once impure,
Now yield to grace, and cry for Jesus' sake:
So shall my peace be made and my salvation sure.

JUNE 5.—*By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth.* Sol. Song iii. 1.

SOME seek the Lord and soon find him, although he hideth himself. Others think they have found him, yet they are mistaken; for, though Christ may be in their thoughts and upon their lips, they may still fail to have him in their hearts. O Lord Jesus, let me ever be mindful of this,—that the Father loveth me; that thou also lovest me, even as thyself, for I am thine, wholly thine. Oh, blessed thought! I feel thy love in my heart. I am precious in thy sight, and thou, Lord, art to me the one altogether lovely.

'Tis for Christ I inquire; him alone I desire,
And I bid all that hinder, depart, oh, depart!
All the joys of the world, all away shall be hurl'd:
There's no peace without Jesus, so dear to my heart.

Come, Shepherd in love, call me Lamb, call me Dove!
Oh, strengthen my faith, keep me near to thy side:

All the world I forsake, thee only I take;
O Saviour, in thee may I ever abide!

No more be it said that my spirit is wed
To the earth, for in Jesus my portion I see:
To my heart earth may cleave; its firm hold it must leave,
For Christ is my Saviour, and he'll set me free.

JUNE 6.—*I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart and hast pleasure in uprightness.* 1 Chron. xxix. 17. *He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.* Prov. ii. 7 *The Lord looketh on the heart.* 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

As God searches the heart and tries the reins, he cannot be deceived by outward form: we ought not, therefore, to deceive ourselves in this particular. It is no certain proof of a real conversion to God if we renounce merely the grosser sins of our former lives, much less if we abstain from such things only as by nature we are not so much inclined to indulge in; but, if our hearts are so renewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit as to be firmly and habitually opposed to our most beloved lusts, we have a good evidence of a real conversion. The Lord and all his upright followers attack first, and with the greatest ardour, these inward enemies.

But if we would thus effectually prosecute the holy war, we must look with an unwearied eye to the Captain of our salvation, believing that he is both able and willing to succour us and to insure complete and everlasting triumph.

'Tis faith that changes all the heart;
'Tis faith that works by love,
That bids all sinful joys depart
And lifts the thoughts above.

Faith must obey her Father's will
As well as trust his grace:
A pardoning God requires us still
To perfect holiness.

JUNE 7.—*I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths; and she shall follow after her lovers, but shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, and not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return unto my first husband, for then was it better with me than now.* Hosea ii. 6, 7.

As it is only with thee, O my Saviour, that I can be happy, I would never leave thee any more: sooner than that I should depart from thee, under whatever plausible pretences, let my way be hedged up and let thorns grow all around me. Let me quickly discover and

crucify every thing which would intercept the manifestations of thy love or diminish mine. Never would I take one step out of the way which thou frequentest, lest I bring on myself guilt and trouble. As for the cross which thou imposest, I will cheerfully bear it, and ever bless thee for the burden.

Glory be to thee, that thou hast not given me up yet and suffered me to run into destruction in my own ways. Be pleased to restrain me still; and, whenever I am in danger of wandering into the broad way, let me find no rest till I am brought back, though it be through the briers of affliction.

I know thy judgments, Lord, are right,
Though they may seem severe:
The sharpest sufferings I endure
Flow from thy faithful care.

Before I knew thy chastening rod,
My feet were apt to stray;
But now I learn to keep thy word,
Nor wander from thy way.

JUNE 8.—*I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thy sun shall no more go down; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the*

days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. Isa. lx. 15, 20, 21. *And I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.* Isa. lxi. 8. *Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.* Isa. lxii. 3, 5.

O MY Lord and Saviour, have I any loveliness in thine eyes? Yes, truly, but only in proportion as I am conformed to thine image and adorned with the glorious robe of thy righteousness. Oh, perfect this thy work in me. Tend me ever as the planting of thy hand, that all my work may be done in thee and so remain, and that my fruit may ever be more abundant, more precious and meet for eternal life.

So may my conduct ever prove
My filial piety and love,
Whilst all my brethren clearly trace
The Saviour's likeness in my face!

JUNE 9.—*And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them*

to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. Jer. xxxii. 40, 41. *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities.* Jer. xxxiii. 8. See also Ezek. xxxvii.; Hosea vi. 3, 4; Joel ii. 21–23.

Oh, blessed promise! God will not turn away from doing us good. He will both plant us and purge us. If we do not at any time observe the good hand of our God upon us, it is because we resist him, or because we do not open our eyes upon his goings. In this way we lose much; for the loss of the soul in any respect is much more serious than the loss of the whole world. O my covenant God, thou wilt ever rejoice over me to do me good. Upon thee let my whole heart always devoutly wait; let it ever be open in prayer, that I may receive of thy fulness. Lord, my heart is open now: oh, quicken me by thy grace.

Yea, O Lord, it is thy pleasure
That we should in gracious measure
Here enjoy the boundless treasure
Of thy love.

Yet we'll not be satisfied
With what here we find supplied,
Nor until that, having died,
We soar above.

JUNE 10.—*My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast for him.* Ps. lxxxix. 28.

WE often hear men speak about the grace of God, the forgiveness of sins, and the assurance of pardon; but they speak too rarely and think too little of baptism. And yet it is by baptism that this grace is offered and conveyed to us. For even though I may fall from my baptismal covenant, yet God is not unfaithful to his covenant, neither does he withhold his grace. Do I sincerely acknowledge and with true repentance lament my fall? do I implore the grace of God for Jesus' sake? Then God my Father receives me as though I had not fallen, and I have already that grace that is offered to me in baptism, and the everlasting pardon of all my sins.

The covenant is sure:
Thy covenant, O Lord,
Forever shall endure,
Even as thy faithful word.
Though I may fail, thou wilt my sin remove,
Wilt dry my tears, restore me to thy love.

Before that time began,
Thou didst propose, through grace,
To grant me, sinful man,
Among thy saints a place.

Oh, boundless love! reveal thyself to me,
That I thy breadth, length, depth, and height may see.

Oh, wondrous sea of love!
Oh, pure and blessed light!
Upon thy waves I'd move,
For thee would I have sight.
Help me by faith to see, that, in return,
Through my cold heart some gentle flame may burn.

JUNE 11.—*I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree.* Hosea xiv. 5, 6. *Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits.* Sol. Song iv. 16. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love.* Gal. v. 22.

MY God, whenever the roots of sin sprout forth in my heart, whenever evil thoughts and sinful affections force themselves in upon me notwithstanding all my efforts to repel them, thou wilt not lay this to my charge. And, as such painful experience bows me down, it must, after all, work for good, even though it might appear as if faith and love and all the fruits of grace had been blasted and I had become a withered branch. I shall yet blossom and be fruitful and sound. This faithful promise of

my God shall yet be fulfilled in me, even though I have to reach it by slow progress and by winding ways. Thy love shall yet be shed abroad in my heart; thy love alone shall constrain me.

As thy garden tend and dress me,
That I may yield fruits of love;
Should some canker-worm distress me,
Send me help, Lord, from above.

As the branch the vine resembles,
Let my fruits abound like thine;
Let that love that ne'er dissembles
In me to thy glory shine.

Prune the suckers of delusion,
And my heart shall welcome thee,
As the dew, in soft effusion,
And thou shalt my Gardener be.

JUNE 12.—*I will perform my good word towards you; for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then ye shall pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me and find me; I will turn away your captivity.* Jer. xxix. 10, 11, 13, 14. *The word of the Lord is right: he spake, and*

it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. Ps. xxxiii. 4, 9.

WERE it so light a matter to rely on the faithfulness of God in times of distress, what need would there be of so many and various promises? If our faith be right, we must wait his time with patience,—which certainly is not an easy task, since the promise of the Lord often tarries, and sometimes his providence seems to oppose his word. On such occasions we must remember that these are the very ways and methods of God, unsearchable by human penetration, yet always consistent and just and worthy of the Divine nature. The wisdom of God chooses, first, to help us inwardly, by exercising faith and patience, and so prepares us for a right use of his outward dispensations, the pleasing and the apparently severe. Thus we receive a double blessing at once from his hands, and learn in all circumstances cheerfully to say, "The will of the Lord be done."

Each of his words demands my faith;
My soul can rest on all he saith:
His truth inviolably keeps
The largest promise of his lips

Oh, tell me, with a gentle voice,
Thou art my God, and I'll rejoice:
Fill'd with thy love, I dare proclaim
The brightest honours of thy name.

JUNE 13.—*Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.* Hosea ii. 14. *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.* Sol. Song vii. 11.

O LORD, this world is nothing to me but a wilderness, a place of tribulation, where, being tossed to and fro, I enjoy no rest; but when I lift up my heart and look for peace in thee I am supported and comforted. Grant that I may thus be strengthened for the time to come whenever I am at a loss what course to take. Let me always firmly believe thee to be a present help in trouble, who art able and willing to bear me up under all outward distresses, till I shall safely arrive at the rest appointed for the people of God.

Our souls shall tread the desert through
With undiverted feet,
And faith and flaming zeal subdue
The terrors that we meet

Our journey is a thorny maze;
But we march upward still,
Forget these troubles of the ways,
And reach at Zion's hill.

See the kind angels at the gates,
Inviting us to come:
There Jesus, the Forerunner, waits
To welcome travellers home.

Eternal glory to the King
That brought us safely through,
Our tongues shall never cease to sing,
And endless praise renew.

JUNE 14.—*And those that walk in pride he is able to abase.* Dan. iv. 37. *The kings of the earth shall bring their glory into the city of our God.* Rev. xxi. 24.

THE children of pride are in many cases not yet lofty enough to satisfy themselves. They seek by an extravagant use of their money to purchase yet a higher position or title or office. "For every one is bent upon making himself great," as the pious Arndt has observed,—"not upon humbling himself and following Christ. Christ may have many that serve him, but few that follow him." O Lord, let not my heart be haughty nor mine eyes lofty. To thee

would I yield all I have and all I am. Let me ever seek thy glory, and not my own, in all I do; and, if there be any presumption in me, may it serve yet to humble my soul!

Think only of thy outward state,
Aim but to rise among the great,
And what but pride could thus inflate
Your heart with pomp and vanity?

Ah! think upon your state with shame,
The sin whence all corruption came,
The guilt that does our blood inflame;
For such thought well may humble thee.

Oh, follow Christ and him alone;
Let love of earthly rank begone;
Then of the great thou shalt be one,
Adorn'd with sweet humility.

JUNE 15.—*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.* Heb. xiii. 8. *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting*

righteousness. Dan. ix. 24. *In him have we righteousness and strength.* Isa. xlv. 24.

In ourselves we find nothing but misery; in Christ all that is good. Nay, he is himself our All; he works and gives what is necessary to salvation: therefore we cannot, and need not, bring any meritorious claims of our own; but, since he is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and our All, we may, and must, rely only on his name, and draw every thing from him by the continual prayer of faith. And when, by a living faith in Christ, he becomes our All, the law, sin, and Satan lose their power to condemn us.

O Lord, how should thy servant see,
  Unless thou give me seeing eyes?
Well may I fall if out of thee!
  If out of thee, how should I rise?
I wander wide without thy aid,
And lose my way in midnight shade.

Oh, let my prayer acceptance find,
  And bring the mighty blessing down;
Eyesight impart, for I am blind,
  And seal me thine adopted son;
A fallen, helpless creature take
And heir of thy salvation make.

JUNE 16.—*Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* 1 John iv. 11. *I say unto you, Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.* Matt. v. 44, 45.

HYPOCRITES may counterfeit the children of God in many things, but they cannot love their enemies from their hearts; and yet by this we must try and know ourselves whether we are really children of God or not. The world very easily, but falsely, suppose themselves to be God's children; sincere Christians find it often very hard to believe it, especially upon a new discovery of their sinfulness: it costs them many a sore conflict; for, if Satan disputed the Sonship of Christ, much less will he spare any of us. But, since love to the children of God and to our enemies is a sure evidence of the state of grace, when we are conscious of that love we may well rejoice, though encompassed with a thousand discouragements.

Now, by the bowels of my God,
His sharp distress, his sore complaints,
By his last groans, his dying blood,
I charge my soul to love the saints.

Clamour, and war, and wrath, begone:
Envy and spite, forever cease;
Let bitter words no more be known
Among the saints, the sons of peace.

Tender and kind be all our thoughts;
Through all our lives let mercy run:
So God forgives our numerous faults
For the dear sake of Christ his Son.

JUNE 17.—*But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.* Heb. xii. 22–24.

So the promise recorded (Isa. xxxv. 10) is fulfilled. The ransomed of the Lord shall return, &c. (Eph. ii. 5, 6; Phil. iii. 20.) The members of the Church militant and of the Church triumphant form but one body, of which Christ is the Head. Accordingly, the former enjoy the salvation of God even upon the earth, and if they abide in Christ they possess as much of his love and care as the latter. O

my Father, through faith and for Jesus' sake, I am even already as pleasant and precious and acceptable in thy sight as I would be were I much more advanced in sanctification than I am, or even numbered among the saints on high. Of all thy children, the weak share as freely in thy pardoning love as do the strong; and thy mercy towards me now is as rich and as tender as if I already stood perfect before thee in thy glory. But purify my heart by faith, that I may the more highly value these unsearchable riches of thy grace and be the more firmly assured that they are mine.

If such the views which grace unfolds,
Weak as it is below,
What raptures must the Church above,
In Jesus' presence, know?

JUNE 18.—*Ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land; but, if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come to pass that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.* Numb. xxxiii. 52, 55; Judges i. 27, ii. 14. *Manasseh did not drive out*

the inhabitants of Bethshean, . . . and the Canaanites would dwell in that land; so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

THE very same is to be observed in the holy and spiritual battles of the Lord. He that fights only against outward sins is but very little, if at all, acquainted with the dangerous enemies in his heart or the deep corruption of original sin; and so the tempter may easily gain an advantage over him. Experienced Christians guard more against the inward assaults of wickedness: they are at peace with no sin, but keep up a constant war with all their most subtle and darling lusts. However, though the Canaanites, our inbred foes, must be conquered, they will dwell in the land, and cannot be wholly thrust out of the bosom, —which makes the Christian warfare continue till death; yet give me grace, O Lord, never to spare my sinful lusts or tempers, but to look unto thee to destroy them without delay, as soon as they begin to move or stir, that I may not be destroyed by them.

Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with thee my heart to share?

Ah, tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!
Then shall my heart from earth be free,
When it hath found repose in thee.

JUNE 19.—*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* Gen. i. 1, 2. *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* Eph. ii. 10.

BEFORE we can really grow in holiness, we must be born again. How is it possible for a man to grow in sanctification without a real change being first wrought in his heart? It is the Spirit's way first to strip us of our own righteousness and strength, to show us our nakedness and nothingness, to fill us with godly sorrow for sin, and then to lead us to Jesus for pardon, sanctification, and justification. Christ being the Vine, we must first be planted in him and draw nourishment and strength from him by faith. When it is fulfilled, "they shall feed and lie down" in his pasture, "and none shall make afraid," (Zeph. iii. 13:) then

we shall be able to bring forth good fruit and obtain victories. For it is God himself that thus makes us perfect in every good work and prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies.

Plenteous grace with thee is found,
Grace to pardon all my sin:
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within.

Thou of life the fountain art:
Freely let me take of thee;
Spring thou up within my heart;
Rise to all eternity.

JUNE 20.—*In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.* Isaiah xlv. 24; 2 Cor. ii. 14, v. 19.

JUSTIFICATION through faith in Christ seems at first a very dark doctrine, hard to be understood; but, after seriously considering it in reference to ourselves, we find, by Scripture and by experience, that we cannot be saved in any other way, and that nothing can be surer than this, though all mankind should turn away from it. When we are made to see that our best performances are unclean in the sight

of God and could not be accepted without the imputation of Christ's righteousness, then we are brought to submit entirely to Christ, and at last to look upon ourselves as wholly justified through him, which alone produces rest, strength, and a gentle spirit, the true image of Christ.

In vain do we hope to procure this rest by any reasonings or strong resolutions of our own. For, if we are sometimes able to master our affections by our own strength, this is yet a building of our own, and prevents our being earnest in prayer. We have now a form of godliness without its power, and are still deceiving our own souls. For nothing can be pleasing in the sight of God, and profit us in the last day, but what he works himself. Away, therefore, with all confidence in our works of righteousness. Let us acknowledge the weakness of our strength, and apply, in our poor, blind, naked, lost, and miserable condition, to the blood and righteousness of Christ: then we shall also find power and dominion over sin. Isaiah xxxiii. 24.

JUNE 21.—*In the day of trouble I will call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me.* Ps. lxxxvi. 7. *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.* Isa. lviii. 9. *The Lord is rich unto all who call upon him; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Joel ii. 32; Acts ii. 21; Rom. x. 12, 13, 19. *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth and delivereth them out of all their troubles.* Ps. xxxiv. 17. *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him.* Ps. cxlv. 18. *The prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* James v. 16.

WHAT encouraging assurances are these! How can God deny me any thing, now, that I pray for? He has passed his word; his Son has purchased every blessing; the Holy Spirit inspires the prayer; the word holds it forth, and the prayer of faith lays hold of it and actually receives it. Prayer is the mouth of faith. If thou wilt have much, "open thy mouth wide," and it shall be filled. Who, then, should not be stirred up to pray much? Oh, what foolishness is this, that we have nothing, but may obtain all from God, and yet are so loath to pray much and pray right!

Prayer makes the darken'd cloud withdraw;
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright:
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

JUNE 22.—*And Joseph said unto his brethren. Come near to me: . . . I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life.* Gen. xlv. 4, 5.

IN like manner does the Lord Jesus, our brother, speak to us. "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away." (Hosea vi. 4.) "That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee." (Ezekiel xvi. 63.) We should never undertake to justify nor excuse any transgression, any omission. When we confess our sins and are ashamed of them, God not only pardons us, but also overrules our short-comings, even, for good. He lifts us up out of the darkness and confusion in which we have involved ourselves; he removes every

stone of stumbling; he prevents our infirmities from injuring others; at times, even, he may use them as a seasonable warning for their good. How excellent thy loving-kindness, O God! Thou ever knowest how to bring good even out of the evil that is in us and about us. Thy goodness draws us to thyself. Our hearts might well melt in view of thy wondrous love. Let thy faithfulness fill me with meekness and confidence, and so let me be wholly thine.

JUNE 23.—*Truly, God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.* Ps. lxxiii. 1. *I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.* 1 Peter ii. 11.

HERE is the conflict in which, as Luther says, "we must of necessity engage;" for we must resist all the lusts of the flesh,—not only its more corrupt affections, but all the movements of desire that are contrary to the Spirit; for these war also against the soul. He that yieldeth his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin wounds himself with his own sword,—yea, takes his own life. He striveth with God his Maker. Oh, madness!

Therefore mortify your own corrupt affections. But do not enter upon it in an excitement of rage or in your own strength. Seek the aid of the Divine Spirit: otherwise they will prove too strong for you. Lord, guard me against the deceitfulness of sin, and inspire me with holy fervour.

The richest blessings God can give
  Are not esteem'd, and never known,
Save only by the souls that live,
  Through faith and prayer, in Christ alone.

For conflicts short, for labours light,
  They have rewards of boundless worth;
Fair Zion rises on their sight,
  And God is with them on the earth.

The pearl, ere found, must first be sought;
  Our foes! by strife we bring them down;
And if with foes we've never fought,
  Who, who could wear the conqueror's crown?

JUNE 24.—*What shall we, then, say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that*

is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Rom. viii. 31–34. *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* Rom. viii. 26.

THEREFORE, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is on my side; he is mine; all things are mine. The heavens are mine; for, by reason of the continual intercession of the blood of Christ on my behalf, the heavens are distilling the blessings of pure grace upon me without ceasing. Through Christ also, my Mediator and High-Priest, even my poor prayer rises before the throne of God, and all the fulness of grace is held out for my enjoyment. Oh that my heart were open, always wide open!

Let these truths ever be impress'd
Upon my heart, and I am blest.

JUNE 25.—*Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever.* Jer. iii. 12. *Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* Ps. lxviii. 18. *My*

covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips. Ps. lxxxix. 34. See also 1 Peter iii. 21, concerning the baptismal covenant; and Luke xv. how the prodigal son was welcomed by his father.

WHEN we wander away from God and do not seek him, nevertheless he comes to seek us: he shows us our poverty and wretchedness and draws us to the Son. And now, if, yielding to his gracious call, we come to him through Christ, if we seek him and fly not *from* him but *to* him, how is it that he will not receive us? How can it be? What mother would not welcome her lost child when it comes back to her again?

In thy baptism God hath plighted
Thee his truth, eternal, sure,
Hast thou this thy covenant slighted?
Still his promise must endure.

'Tis an ever-faithful sentence:
"Jesus sinners will receive:"
Come again in true repentance,
Turn again, and thou shalt live.

Lo, his heart! how fondly yearning,
Calling, waiting day by day!
Why, then, art thou not returning?
Come, nor longer from him stray

JUNE 26.—*And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquities.* Isa. xxxiii. 24 See also Ps. cxxx. 4; Luke vii. 47; 1 John ii. 1, 2.

HERE we see that we make progress in the fear of God, and in sanctification of heart and life, as we come to understand and to appreciate more correctly the forgiveness of sin and our justification by faith. Let us depend upon grace alone; let us look only to Christ and confide in him, as if there were nothing good in us,—as if even the good we may have were marred with imperfections. If we be so minded, our peace and joy and comfort shall be great; for we shall find all in the Redeemer. Thus shall we have cheerfulness and strength to walk in the ways of God. If, however, we should attempt to lean upon our own works and our own feelings, doubts and fears and uncertainties and faint-heartedness will be our portion.

He who his load of sin with heartiness detests,
Flies to the cross of Christ, and in grace only rests,
Who mercy doth implore, whose faith grasps what is wanted,—
He, he shall find that all faith's richest gifts are granted

He who hath much forgiven aboundeth much in love.
Is holiness thine aim? then from this aim ne'er move,
Relying on thyself; but learn to be believing
That thou forgiveness hast; thus art thou strength receiving.

JUNE 27.—*Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord. . . . Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. . . . And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.* Luke xii. 35–37, 47. See also John xiii. 17, xv. 14.

O MY Lord, forbid that I should ever be lukewarm and slothful and drowsy in thy service. I would always watch, and with increasing earnestness would seek in thy name oil for my lamp, that my light may burn brighter and brighter through faith and love. Thus would I always hold myself in readiness. What folly would it be if I were to put off the work of preparation for some future hour! Lord, help me, that I may be always ready!

How glorious is the high reward
Which faithful servants shall inherit!
Grant me at all times strength, O Lord,
That I may show a faithful spirit.

Oh, let the oil of grace abound,
And let my light be ever burning,
That I may not with them be found
Who little do, with all their learning.

JUNE 28.—*Be content with such things as ye have.* Heb. xiii. 5. *Rejoicing in hope.* Rom. xii. 12.

HE that believes and is content has not built his hope upon any earthly foundation. Yea, he is often more troubled in mind when surrounded by earthly prosperity, when riches increase and outward things go well, than he is in view of adversity or when losses befall him. In the latter case he has often more peace than in the former. He knows that the hand of God alone supplies his need, that the whole world, that many different treasuries, are in the hand of God, and that, when any one of them is shut up, God will be sure to go to some other one and take out of it the very thing which, at the time, it is best to bestow. "The

Lord is my portion, saith my soul: therefor will I hope in him." Lament. iii. 24

Let no impatient murmurings rise,
No vain devices rend thy breast:
God could have made it otherwise
Long, long ago, had he thought best.
Draw off your heart from things below,
And fix your hope on things above:
Learn that on earth in tears we sow,
In heaven we reap both joy and love.

The more we trample on the ground
The lusts of earth, its vanity,
The sweeter shall our joys be found,
The brighter shall our glory be.
Then fight and suffer, do and dare,
And ever call upon your Guide,
"Lead me, oh, lead me, anywhere,
Only that I be near thy side!"

JUNE 29.—*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers, and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Let not filthiness be once named among you, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient.* Eph. iv. 29, v. 4.

IDLE words are hurtful words: they grieve the Holy Spirit, destroy the sacred and happy feelings which have been obtained by prayer,

and cause nothing but levity and distraction of mind. Let this be a caution against a talkative disposition, which, instead of tending to the glory of God, is usually productive of corrupt communications. May all Christians take heed to refrain their tongues, and never speak unadvisedly, but always consider first whether their words can be profitable to others and acceptable to God in heaven! O Lord, teach me thy wisdom, "to keep my mouth as it were with a bridle" and to weigh all my words like gold. Let my heart and lips be moved and governed by thy Holy Spirit, that both my silence and talking may be according to thy will and discretion. Grant that I may converse much with thee in prayer and thanksgiving, for mine own spiritual good and that of others; and, whenever I open my lips, let my words be so seasoned and blessed as to minister grace to the hearers.

If aught could tempt my soul to stray
From heavenly wisdom's narrow way,
To fly the good I would pursue,
Or do the thing I would not do,
Still He who felt temptation's power
Will guard me in that dangerous hour.

JUNE 30.—*And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.* Gal. vi. 9, 10.

IT is not at all the Lord's purpose, in giving wealth to any man, that he should hoard it up, and spread it out before himself, and count it over, and so pollute both hand and heart. Whenever we have occasion to count money, it would be well for us to pray, "O Lord, let covetousness never bring me into bondage. When I have occasion to deal with money, let me do it in the spirit of true faith, so that, whilst my hands are handling it, my heart may not be defiled with the love of gold! Let me be rich in good works, and neither waste my time nor be unfaithful in the use of any talent thou hast committed to my trust."

Now, in these days of ours, what should be our opinion?
What should we deem the thing of greatest worth we see?
Surely 'tis Time alone: Time sitteth in dominion;
For Time itself is but part of eternity.
Each little moment here we spend in holiness
Shall yield a harvest rich upon the heavenly ground.
Alas that men their days should waste in worldliness,
And fail to sow the seed of endless life around!
Alas! the loss of hours men can no more regain,
Of which Eternity no traces shall retain!

JULY.

JULY 1.—*Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: thy Spirit is good: lead me into the land of uprightness.* Ps. cxliii. 10. *He that hath mercy on them shall lead them; even by the springs of water shall he guide them.* Isa. xlix. 10. *And I will bring the blind by a way they know not: I will lead them in paths they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them.* Isa. xlii. 10.

HE that fixes his faith in the atonement of Christ will not, in a legal spirit, trust in his own works; and yet he is always diligent and watchful in his works. He regards himself as blind, and says, "I know not what to do;" and therefore he commits himself calmly and implicitly to the direction of his heavenly Guide. His wish is both to move and to stand still as God may direct: therefore he says in respect to all things, even the ordinary duties and occurrences of life, "Lord, I commit myself

and my work wholly unto thee: teach me in all things to do thy will."

Teach me to work according to thy pleasure;
Thy Spirit lead me in the upright way,
That I may know thee better day by day,
And thus at last attain my heavenly treasure.
Grant that I more and more in strength of faith may grow,
Denying still myself, the world, and all below.

JULY 2.—*Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life.* 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4.

HERE we are often strangely bowed down by sufferings, anxieties, and oppressive burdens. See, then, how necessary it is that we should always abide in Christ, who is our peace,—that we should calmly and confidently hold fast to his word, and continue steadfast in prayer, even though all things should be dark and strange around us. At last we shall surely be helped. Yea, our trials themselves may in reality be nothing but help from above,—the good seed of eternal life. Let us hope and trust that it shall be so.

Vain my thoughts! Lord, let me not trials or the cross
be slighting;
For it beareth precious fruit. Let me, ne'er in sin de-
lighting,
Always find the hopes of heaven, always in my heart
increase.
I desire not,—oh, forbid it!—I desire not carnal peace.

Never let my heart, O Lord, yield to sense or time's
desires;
Let me to the cross be bound, ever do as Christ requires;
Let me not, in selfishness, forge a heavier cross and
chain,
But in meekness, with thy help, carry what thou shalt
ordain.

Be my help, Lord; let me never, never to despair sur-
render;
What men often well endure is too hard for infants
tender.
In thy school are divers orders, and thou givest each
what's best,
As thou grantest strength to labour: only lead me to
thy rest.

JULY 3.—*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* Matt. xi. 29. *Be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.* 1 Peter v. 5, 6.

SUCH as are haughty and self-conceited rush against the mighty hand of God and destroy themselves; but those that are humbled under it will be protected by the same. Whatever knowledge or skill we may obtain in the schools of human learning, the Scripture does not allow us to be truly wise, but calls us blind, and mere worldly students, till we learn to be poor in spirit, lowly in heart, and dead to the world. (Prov. xi. 2; 1 Cor. i. and ii.) Therefore, the more a man dies to this world, the more he is enlightened.

Fain would I my Lord pursue,
Be all my Saviour taught,
Do as Jesus bids me do,
And think as Jesus thought;
But 'tis thou must change my heart;
The perfect gift must come from thee:
Meek Redeemer, now impart
Thine own humility.

Lord, I cannot, must not rest,
Till I thy mind obtain:
Chase presumption from my breast,
And all thy mildness gain!
Give me, Lord, thy gentle heart,
Thy lowly mind my portion be;
Meek Redeemer, now impart
Thine own humility.

PACIFIC LUTHERAN
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JULY 4.—*O love the Lord, all ye his saints.* Ps. xxxi. 23

ALL, even the most pious, and especially the young, should be on their guard against too familiar intercourse with persons of the opposite sex. Such are the infirmities of our nature, and so crafty is the enemy of our souls, that such intercourse can easily awaken affections that may at least be unfavourable to the love we owe our Saviour. Thus we may exhibit the appearance of evil, grieve them who love the Lord, and give occasion to his enemies to blaspheme. Love the Lord with all thy heart, and the love of the creature shall never prove a snare to thee.

For thee, O Love Divine, I'm praying; to me thy peaceful joys impart;
I suffer with this long delaying; come, take possession of my heart.
To thee I yield my life with gladness: alas! without thee, all is sadness!

O Love Divine, with cries unceasing, I still my fervent prayers repeat;
Impart thy purity increasing, since thee I earnestly entreat;
For if I love thee purely, only, there's naught can make me sad or lonely.

Let other love lie in subjection, but most of all the love of earth;
Full oft it leadeth to dejection, to many sorrows giveth birth:
The smallest portion, left remaining, like thorns will pierce and rouse complaining.

JULY 5.—*But love your enemies, and do good, and lend hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great. . . . Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. . . . Give, and it shall be given unto you. good measure, pressed down, and shaken together.* Luke vi. 35–38. *And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.* Matt. x. 42.

"VERILY, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv. 40.) "God loveth a cheerful giver; and God is able to make all grace abound toward you. Now, he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food and multiply your seed sown." (2 Cor. ix. 7, 10.) Who would withhold seed from the sower? The more freely we give, the more plentifully God gives in return. The more freely we sow, the more

does the seed increase, the more plenteously can we sow again, and the richer shall be our harvest in heaven. Prov. xxviii. 27; Eccles. xi. 1–6.

Father, thy name I glorify,
For thou dost mercies multiply,
That as thy works of grace are found,
So may my works of faith abound

For all thy gifts sent from above,
Grant me a heart of grateful love:
I sow the seed which thou hast given,
And I shall reap at last in heaven.

JULY 6.—*Loose them, and bring them unto me; and if any say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.* Matt. xxi. 2, 3. *The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burned with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.* Judges xv. 14.

THUS the Spirit of the Lord makes us free from all spiritual bonds; for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor. iii. 17.) Though I was torn from Christ by the enemy, yet as a robber he gets no right to me. Christ does not give up that right to me which he

claims on so many accounts; and, as soon as I am made willing by his grace to surrender myself to him and desire to be delivered from the power of Satan, he vindicates and saves me, as his property; I am his; Satan looses his hold, and nothing in the world can withhold me from my Redeemer. All the fetters must fall off.

What though the hosts of death and hell
All arm'd against me stood?
Terrors no more shall shake my soul:
My refuge is my God.

Arise, O Lord; fulfil thy grace,
While I thy glory sing;
Remove each horror from the grave,
And take from Death his sting.

Salvation to the Lord belongs;
His arm alone can save;
Blessings attend his people here,
And reach beyond the grave.

JULY 7.—*Make me a new heart and a new spirit.* Ezek. xviii. 31. See also 2 Cor. v. 17, 18–21.

MANY who would be thought to have made considerable advances in religion remain to this hour destitute of deep and self-abasing convictions. Hence they never effectually re-

pair to Christ for reconciliation and righteousness; they feel not the necessity of a new heart, but content themselves with the observance of religious rites, and with a morality that elevates them but a little above the prevailing manner of the world. O Lord, let me daily receive a word from thee, to nourish and strengthen my soul, so as to be renewed daily by it more and more.

Oh for a heart to love my God!—
A heart from sin set free,—
A heart that always feels the blood
So freely shed for me!

A heart resign'd, submissive, meek,
My dear Redeemer's throne,—
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone!

A lowly and believing heart,
Abhorring self and sin;
A constant heart, which naught can part
From Christ, who dwells within!

A child-like heart, that cries for food
And pines for love divine;
An upright heart, by grace renew'd,—
A copy, Lord, of thine.

JULY 8.—*Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things.* Luke x. 41. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.* Prov. iv. 23.

As the virtue of a strong spirituous liquor evaporates by degrees in a vial which is not closely stopped, in like manner the life and power of the spirit insensibly vanish away if the heart is not kept with all diligence. Therefore many must be tried and sifted, that they may know, like Hezekiah, what is in their hearts. (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) What, then, is more necessary than to take heed to our own spirit and to keep close to the written word? For, as the latter times draw nearer, the more plausible will errors and seducements appear, both on your right hand and on your left: beware of being drawn off from the truth, either by the worldly prudence of half-hearted professors, or by pretences to merit in the self-righteous Pharisee.

O Lord, permit me not to be
A stranger to myself and thee:
Amidst a thousand thoughts I rove,
Forgetful of my highest love.

Call me away from flesh and sense;
One sovereign word can draw me thence:
I would obey the voice Divine,
And all inferior things resign.

Be earth, with all her scenes, withdrawn;
Let noise and vanity begone:
In secret silence of the mind,
My heaven, and there my God, I find.

JULY 9.—*My soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land.* Ps. cxliii. 6. *Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* Rev. xxii. 17. *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water* John vii. 37, 38.

WHEN thy spiritual vigour and enjoyments, O man of God, begin to fail, examine thyself closely what may be the cause; implore pardon for all known offences, and guard against repeating them. And, though thou shouldst not discover any particular sign of degeneracy, yet humble thyself deeply before the Lord,—remembering, at the same time, that thou art accepted, beloved, justified, and blessed in Christ: in this disposition quietly wait to be refreshed again with the streams of Divine grace; but be also

sure to cherish and make a right use of them. Thus thou shalt be like a watered garden. Isa. lviii. 11.

My stock lies dead, and no increase
Doth my dull husbandry improve:
Lord, help me! let thy grace and peace
Drop from above.

The dew doth every morning fall;
And shall the dew outstrip thy Dove?
The dew, for which grass cannot call,
Drops from above.

Oh, come! for thou dost know the way;
Or, if to me thou wilt not move,
Remove me where I need not say,
"Drop from above!"

JULY 10.—*My soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation; he only is my defence, I shall not be greatly moved. Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us.* Ps. lxii. 1, 2, 8.

THE more patient, believing, and single-eyed we are, the sooner we shall see the salvation and victory of the Lord. Double-minded souls have the greatest struggle, and the slothful must tarry the longer. Sometimes, it is true,

though we are faithful, yet we must cry out, "O Lord, how long?" (Ps. vi. 3.) But, nevertheless, he always hears and delivers us, though we do not see and feel it directly but seem to suffer continually. In heaven we shall certainly see it and reap the blessed fruits of all our afflictions and prayers.

Not from the dust affliction grows,
Nor troubles rise by chance;
But we are born to cares and woes,—
A sad inheritance!

As sparks break out from burning coals
And still are upwards borne,
So grief is rooted in our souls,
And man grows up to mourn.

Yet with my God I leave my cause
And trust his promised grace:
He rules me by his well-known laws
Of love and righteousness.

Not all the pains that e'er I bore
Shall spoil my future peace;
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please.

JULY 11.—*My soul fainteth for thy salvation. My soul is continually in my hand. Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed*

of my hope. Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name. Ps. cxix. 81, 109, 116, 132.

LORD, I love thy name. Thy name is the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, the Lord our Righteousness. I confide and depend, with my whole heart, not upon myself nor upon any thing that is in me, but upon thy pure grace and righteousness alone; and in this confidence my mind is kept in peace. Alas! how weak and ignorant am I! and Satan is so malignant and crafty. How shall I escape? Oh, be thou, Lord, my Refuge and my Deliverer!

Jesus, thine I am forever:
Bless me with thy loving favour;
Come and always dwell with me:
Jesus, I'm distress'd for thee.

Jesus, ever watch thou o'er me;
In my goings go before me;
This my constant cry shall be:—
Jesus, I'm distress'd for thee.

Jesus, rule my heart in kindness;
Save me from all carnal blindness
From the ways of sin I flee:
Jesus, I'm distress'd for thee.

Jesus, keep my heart forever
None shall take thy place,—no, never:
Let me ne'er a wanderer be:
Jesus, I'm distress'd for thee.

JULY 12.—*For mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.* Ps. xxxviii. 4. *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!* John i. 29. *Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee.* Zech. iii. 4.

THY Surety Jesus Christ has already, in the day of his innocent sufferings and by his one offering, taken away thy sin, and at the same time thy sin has passed away from thy Surety himself. He is already justified and glorified and without sin, and thou art justified in him. The great act of grace has already been completed, and its blessings have been freely granted to thee in baptism. They who are at ease and secure in themselves have not the least possible reason to think that they are forgiven; but we who believe in Jesus have quite as little reason to doubt it. The word of God sweeps all doubt, all misgiving, away.

Look not, O soul, with too direct an aim
Upon the mournful record of thy guilt:

Forget thyself; behold the dying Lamb
Who for thy sins his precious blood has spilt.

The Father sees thy sins no more on thee,
But as they were upon thy Saviour laid:
Behold the Lamb, and be at once set free!
Behold, the Lamb has full atonement made!

Oh, when thy heart is sad, oppress'd with woe,
Look only at thy sins on Him who died:
Behold the Lamb, thy Sacrifice, and know
He is the Lamb of God, and thou his Bride!

JULY 13.—*My beloved is mine, and I am his.* Cant. ii. 16. *I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.* Hosea ii. 19, 20.

BY faith in the blood of Christ we are accepted and closely united to him as our Bridegroom. By that we daily eat his flesh, drink his blood, and are sprinkled all over; and need there is of a daily sprinkling, that our persons and services may be accepted,—since the best of our works, our prayers and praises, our duties and graces, are all unclean till washed in the blood of Jesus. See Heb. ix 19–21.

Object of my first desire,
Jesus, crucified for me,
All to happiness aspire,
Only to be found in thee:
Thee to praise, and thee to know,
Constitute our bliss below;
Thee to see, and thee to love,
Constitute our bliss above.

Lord, it is not life to live,
If thy presence thou deny;
Lord, if thou thy presence give,
'Tis no longer death to die!
Source and Giver of repose,
Singly from thy smile it flows:
Peace and happiness are thine;
Mine they are if thou art mine.

JULY 14.—*When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.* Ps. xxvii. 8. *I am thine: save me; for I have sought thy precepts.* Ps. cxix. 94. *They who seek me early shall find me.* Prov. viii. 17. *The humble shall see this and be glad; and your heart shall live, that seek God.* Ps. lxix. 32. *Seek, and ye shall find.* Matt. vii. 7. *Whosoever findeth me findeth life.* Prov. viii. 35. *I am the Life.* John xiv. 6.

SUCH arguments and entreaties we may use with God to strengthen us in faith: he does not want them, but we do; and he is well

pleased when we take him at his word. Were we to decline approaching God with supplications till our hearts were conscious of peculiar life and earnestness, we might perhaps forever remain distant and prayerless. We must not, therefore, yield to the suggestions of a dull frame, but rouse ourselves, and at least make a determined effort. Thus we may hope that God will help our infirmities and warm our affections, so that our hearts, while seeking him amidst much discouragement, may "live." O Lord, I plead thy precious promises; and thou canst not deny thy word. Thou hast engaged to assist a feeble petitioner. Let thy Holy Spirit abide with me, to quicken my soul when fainting, and to rule my heart in all things, that no sin may have dominion over me.

Lord, I address thy heavenly throne:
Call me a child of thine;
Send down the Spirit of thy Son,
To form my heart divine

JULY 15.—*O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed.* Ps. xxv. 2. *In thee, O Lord, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.* Ps. xxxviii. 15. *Let none that wait on thee be ashamed.* Ps. xxv. 3. *Hope*

maketh not ashamed. Rom. v. 5. *They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which abideth forever.* Ps. cxxv. 1. *The vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* Heb. ii. 3. See also Isa. xlix. 23.

DOES God delay his promises and the enemy raise a suspicion against his faithfulness? Remember, it is said, "Wait." Thou art still alive, and shalt be a witness to God's faithfulness. If he were not faithful and true, he could not be God. His faithfulness is eternal, and as sure and great as himself,—above all our thoughts. Thou shalt at last the more gloriously experience it and not be ashamed. Heaven and earth shall pass away; but his word shall not fail, because "he keepeth truth forever." And his truth concerning his people comprehends all their salvation and all their desire.

Shake from thy soul, o'erwhelm'd, depress'd,
The encumbering load that galls its rest,
That wastes her strength with bondage vain;
With courage break the enslaving chain!
Let faith exert its conquering power;
Say, in thy fearing, trembling hour,
"Father, thy pitying aid impart!"
'Tis done! a sigh can reach his heart.

JULY 16.—*Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* Gal. vi. 7.

A CERTAIN venerable minister of the word, who had been distinguished for his devotion and purity of character, once remarked, upon his death-bed, that the attention of men ought to be more frequently and prayerfully turned to the consideration of the *Last Things*. The Apostle Paul, who so largely enjoyed the spirit of the gospel, was ready on all fitting occasions to speak of these things. (Acts. xxiv. 25.) At present it may be very needful, and it may yet become even more so, to call upon men to consider their latter end, and especially to admonish them against presumptuous trifling with gospel truth and spiritual realities. This hollow and extravagant pretence of gospel security, this trifling familiarity with the wounds of the Redeemer, will not stand the test of death. Then many who have all along professed to have great joy will be overwhelmed with sorrow,—though many, too, who have sorrowed after a godly sort will be filled with rejoicing.

Death hastes to all below;
His hour none can tell;
Art thou prepared to go?
Ponder this question well.
What were thy hope if just as now thou art
God were to summon thee from earth to part?

Improve this little space,
In view of endless years:
Its fruit of sin, or grace,
Beyond the grave appears.
Sow now the seed of faith and piety:
As thou hast sown, so shall thy harvest be.

JULY 17.—*Moses said, There shall not an hoof be left behind. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste.* Exod. x. 26, xii. 33. *Behold, we have forsaken all.* Matt. xix. 27. *Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.* Luke xiv. 33. See also 1 Cor. vii. 29–31.

Is Christ my All? then to deny myself and to follow him is a work which I will not find too hard, to which my heart will promptly turn, and upon the performance of which I will not claim any special personal merit. I belong to Christ, entirely to him: let me keep back and reserve nothing whatever for myself,

but surrender every thing to his disposal and commit all to his control. He will cherish and protect me; he will supply all my need.

He who all forsaketh, choosing Christ alone,
His foundation taketh on the Living Stone;
He the world defieth, hath in God his rest;
He on Christ relieth, and in Christ is blest.

Leaving all behind me, all I see around,
Nothing here shall bind me to this earthly ground.
I will upward wander in the narrow road:
Blest shall I be yonder, when I reach my God!

JULY 18.—*Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.* Ps. xxv. 1. *Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* Ps. x. 17.

FAITH only desires Christ, and neither delights in the gain nor grieves much at the loss of temporal things, but, through an earnest desire for Christ and his word, rises above all creatures and overcomes all worldly pleasures and fears. This, being the work which God undertakes, will certainly be accomplished; nay, it is looked upon as really accomplished already in our desires and endeavours after it, in the same manner as evil desires are reckoned

for deeds in the sight of God, though they never proceed to outward acts. Such is the encouragement of the feeblest believer, amidst all difficulties and in the face of the most powerful opposition.

I cannot bear thine absence, Lord;
My life expires if thou depart:
Be thou, my heart, still near my God,
And thou, my God, be near my heart.

I was not born for earth and sin,
Nor can I live on things so vile;
Yet I will stay my Father's time,
And hope and wait for heaven a while.

Then, dearest Lord, in thine embrace
Let me resign my fleeting breath,
And, with a smile upon my face,
Pass the important hour of death.

JULY 19.—*Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee; thou saidst, Fear not. O Lord, thou hast pleaded the cause of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.* Lam. iii. 57, 58. *Fear not, for I am with thee.* Isa. xliii. 5. *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.* Rev. i. 18.

CHRIST has overcome death, led captivity captive. and "by one offering perfected forever

them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) Whoever leaves this world believing in him has therefore nothing to fear after death. O my heavenly Father, dispose me to seek diligently after holiness; and, though the work of sanctification will be imperfect in this life, (which should humble me much,) yet let it cause no fear of death nor disturb my confidence in thee; since my salvation and my confidence do not depend on a perfect holiness here, but on my being in Christ and adopted through him. This adoption the weakest child enjoys as well as the strongest,—though both are not equally sensible of it. Every true believer, whether weak or strong, has eternal life, and shall not fall into condemnation. If, therefore, I am a child of God, though a weak one, I am still an heir, and shall find life and deliverance in death.

Walk with me through the dreadful shade,
And certify that thou art mine;
My spirit, calm and undismay'd,
I shall into thy hands resign.

JULY 20.—*And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.* Eph. vi. 17, 18. *Continuing instant in prayer.* Rom. xii. 12. *For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!* Luke xi. 10, 11.

THE sword is a weapon of warfare. If I use the word of God as a sword against sin, I am waging war upon it, not indeed in my own strength, but by faith in Christ and with the power of prayer. I am also in earnest, and always at last victorious in this war, but only by the help of the Holy Ghost. I am still in the flesh, not yet a glorified spirit: therefore I must still strive against sin; and I ever need the constraining, encouraging help of the Divine Spirit; for without this help many a time would prayer be forgotten and many another duty be neglected. Lord, as a good soldier, may I have a perfect hatred and a burning zeal against all sin!

Thou hast thy sad defeats deplored,
Hast yielded in the strife;

Now take the word, the Spirit's sword;
Drink of the fount of life.

In prayer and fighting, then, be brave;
And, as thy prayers ascend,
Strength shall come on thee: thou shalt have
The victory in the end.

JULY 21.—*Take, eat: this is my body. . . . Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* Matt. xxvi. 26.

THE sacrament of the Lord's Supper, says Luther, requires nothing at our hands: on the contrary, it gives us all things. In approaching it, you need not bring any thing with you, but you can carry every blessing away. Nay, you need not provide apparel and ornaments for yourself; only come naked and poor and miserable, as you are. For why do we come to the table of the Lord? That we may learn how to believe that Christ has died for our sins. This is the greatest of all attainments: from beginning to end it is a Divine work, so to believe in Christ: it brings us down deep before the Lord; but it fills us with peace and

power. Many a communicant thinks he understands it all already; but a believer ever prays to know more of the glorious mystery.

By faith I always taste thy goodness, O my Saviour!
Yet most of all my soul, when at thy board, can trace,
To my peculiar joy, signs of thy special favour,
Assuring me again that I'm a child of grace.
So here once more I stand, divinest gifts imploring,
Since thou, O mighty Lord, so near—yea, in me—art:
Thou comest, the ransom-price thyself upon me pouring,
And so thy blood is life—yea, power—in my heart.
Thou bringest the blessing, Lord, and thou in me prevailing
Shalt bring to naught all sin that is my soul assailing.

JULY 22.—*Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.* Matt. xxv. 28, 29. *He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.* Luke xvi. 10.

GOD requireth of us that we should be found faithful. Art thou faithful? then thou hast nothing whatever to fear; then never say, "Oh,

if only this or that were not the case!" Far rather say, "All this is mine, and all must work together for my good, even what appears to be against me; so that if this very thing were wanting, perhaps I might lack my greatest blessing: it is at least what the weight is to the clock." Faithfulness multiplies and increases every thing that is good, and transforms evil itself into good. The last words of a dying teacher to his children were, "Be faithful: God is faithful."

Hast thou e'er sincerely sought
In thy graces to increase?
Faithfulness, the Saviour taught,
Multiplieth grace and peace.

Be thou faithful to thy Lord;
Ever walk in his commands:
He will grant—oh, blest reward!—
Larger talents to thy hands.

Watch and pray; thy strength shall grow:
All that faithless souls despise
He will grant thee here below,
And his glory in the skies.

JULY 23.—*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name, be the glory.* Ps. cxv. 1.

How little reason have we to glory in any thing of our own, since nothing but sin is ours, which even defiles that which is of God!

O Lord, grant that I may always give thee the praise of thy own, and may learn to delight and glory in thee, having no aim but to walk before thee in godly simplicity and sincerity. For he that walketh uprightly walketh surely. (Prov. x. 9.) All disquiet of mind arises from our own lusts and unmortified tempers, which make the bosom like a troubled sea. And no settled calm shall we find till we have a single eye to God's glory and can count ourselves worthy of no good. Then we may draw comfort out of trouble, and learn to praise the Lord, whether he giveth or taketh away; being sure that all things are working for our good and tending to God's glory, (which he knows best how to promote,) and that nothing but sin can make us unhappy and miserable.

My Maker and my King,
To thee my all I owe;
Thy sovereign bounty is the spring
From whence my blessings flow.

The creature of thy hand,
On thee alone I live:
My God, thy benefits demand
More praise than life can give.

JULY 24.—*No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.* Matt. vi. 24.

LORD, thou gavest thyself for me wholly; and shall I offer thee but half my heart? No! no! I too am wholly thine. Receive me, body, soul, and spirit, to be thine entirely, thine forever. Oh, grant me grace, that I may ever continue sincere in this my surrender and never be seduced from it.

Oh, strange is the conflict between the two voices
That oft on the right and the left hand I hear!
One calls, and in pleasure's loud laughter rejoices;
The other so solemnly breathes in my ear:—

"Fly, fly earth's delusions, my kingdom preferring;
Oh, haste to my kingdom, or thou art undone!"
Now, what choice shall I make? My decision deferring,
I have long sought to reconcile both into one.

No, never! Such union can ne'er be effected:
Either God or the world undisputed must rule;

And the heart that has equally both lords respected
Has but chosen the follies and ways of the fool.

The hour has come! My salvation securing,
I turn from all folly and choose the best part;
I turn from what's fleeting to what is enduring:
Oh, begone, thou vain world! Lord, I yield thee my heart!

JULY 25.—*But we all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.* 2 Cor. iii. 18. *Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.* Phil. ii. 5. *Leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* 1 Peter ii. 21.

IF, before we say or do any thing, we would always consider whether it was agreeable to the pattern of Christ, a multitude of sins would be avoided. Lord, however guilty and miserable I am, yet, when I can humble myself before thee as the vilest of sinners, and look up unto thee by faith, depending only on thy free grace, I enjoy peace. Grant, therefore, O my God, that this beholding of thee may be my constant exercise, and that thus I may be strengthened cheerfully to follow thy pattern, and be daily more changed into the glorious

image of thy love, patience, and humility, and thus be ripening for eternal life.

This life's a dream, an empty show!
But the bright world to which I go
Hath joys substantial and sincere:
When shall I wake and find me there?

Oh, glorious hour! Oh, blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God,
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul.

My flesh shall slumber in the ground
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise.

JULY 26.—*Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Rom. v. 1. *For he is our peace.* Eph. ii. 14. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.* Rom. viii. 1.

WHEN we have found peace in believing, we must not straightway set ourselves up for remarkable achievements and astonishing attainments in the work of sanctification. By such a course we could easily be misled into a de-

pendence upon our own works, and brought under the law again. Our first and chief concern must be to seek, and to persist in seeking, peace and all the treasures of salvation in Christ alone, so that sanctification of heart and life may grow as the fruit of faith, and thus prove itself to be genuine. We must first eat and drink and wax strong by faith; and afterwards we can give to others and labour and work with zeal and love. Oh, then, grant me true faith, thou who art the Author and Finisher of faith! Amen.

Sin can no more hold me in condemnation;
For sin itself, through Christ, has been condemn'd:
How can it o'er me spread its conflagration,
Whilst streams of Life o'er all my soul descend?
Immanuel has quench'd the flame:
He ne'er forsakes my soul; so much he loves my name.

JULY 27.—*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.* Ps. xxiii. 4.

To rejoice in the light of God's countenance is certainly most pleasant, but not always so profitable to every one as sometimes to walk in the dark, nay, in the valley of the shadow

of death. Some are more humble and cautious while walking in the dark than in the light, and glimpses of grace are then exceedingly precious; yet such should consider, for their humiliation, that darkness is often the effect of a wrong spirit and careless walk. O Lord, grant that when I am deprived of sensible comforts I may yet be enabled to rely upon thy bare word, and in death may be refreshed by the light of thy countenance. Amen. Thou hast declared "that the righteous hath hope in his death." Prov. xiv. 32.

Shrinking from the cold hand of death,
I soon shall gather up my feet,
Shall soon resign my mortal breath,
And die, my fathers' God to meet.

Number'd among thy people, I
Expect with joy thy face to see:
Because thou didst for sinners die,
Jesus, in death remember me!

Oh that without a lingering groan
I may the welcome word receive,
My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live!

JULY 28.—*And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart.* Luke ix. 47.

OH that I could always keep my thoughts in check and discipline my heart with the word of God! Oh that I were more impartial and strict in reckoning with myself when I err! Our thoughts do not escape the notice of Him with whom we have to do. Evil thoughts in a believing heart do not always come directly from Satan only: they may originate in the heart itself, and therefore should be the more deeply deplored. I continually feel the presence of an evil, sinful nature; and therefore it is always necessary to pray without ceasing and to abide continually in the word. Lord, help me in this, and enable me, through thy Holy Spirit, always to think what is right and always at the right time.

He who from evil thoughts would part
  Should have his days with labour fill'd,
Should guard each passage to his heart,
  Nor in the air should castles build.

Oh, when vain hope within thee burns,
  Or anxious care disturbs thy rest,
To God commit all such concerns:
  He always orders what is best.

The times will change, with sin be fraught;
Oh, let sin never lodge with thee:
Pray, take God's word, be heaven thy thought,
And earthly thoughts will swiftly flee.

JULY 29.—*Open thou mine eyes, that I may see wonderful things out of thy law.* Ps. cxix. 18. *Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.* Ps. xiii. 3. *For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light.* Ps. xxxvi. 9. *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness.* John xii. 46. *The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind.* Ps. cxlvi. 8.

MANY imagine that their eyes are opened, and that they have clear notions of religion; but they see just like Eve after eating the forbidden fruit: their hearts, being corrupted, are destitute of Christian simplicity and godly sincerity. For he that does not understand the word of God by the light of the Holy Spirit, through faith and prayer, but only through his natural reason, is certainly blind still, (Rev. iii. 17;) and one plausible temptation to error and sin is enough to break the strongest chain of human reasoning: it is only faith that gets the victory. 1 John v. 4.

Light of those whose dreary dwelling
Borders on the shades of death,
Come, and, by thy love revealing,
Dissipate the clouds beneath!

The new heaven and earth's Creator,
In our deepest darkness rise,
Scattering all the night of nature,
Pouring eyesight on our eyes.

JULY 30.—*Without me ye can do nothing: abide in me.* John xv. 4, 5.

I CAN no more do without thee, O my dear Saviour, than the branches can do without the vine! Keep me, therefore, always in thyself, that I may be effectually convinced of mine insufficiency, and with humble gratitude may acknowledge my boundless obligations to thy preserving and strengthening grace. May I never be left in the least thing to my own strength, but be directed, assisted, and blessed by thee in all my doings! As far as I confide in myself, I am distrustful of thee, and consequently weak; on the other hand, the more I distrust myself, the more I confide in thee and shall be strengthened and blessed.

Son of God, thy blessing grant;
Still supply my every want;
Tree of Life, thine influence shed;
With thy sap my spirit feed.

Tenderest branch, alas! am I;
Wither without thee, and die;
Weak as helpless infancy:
Oh, confirm my soul in thee.

Unsustain'd by thee, I fall;
Send the strength for which I call;
Weaker than a bruiséd reed,
Help I every moment need.

All my hopes on thee depend:
Love me, save me, to the end;
Give me thy continuing grace!
Take the everlasting praise.

JULY 31.—*Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble. I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.* Ps. l. 14, 15, 23. See also Isa. xxv. 9.

NOTHING moves God more to hear us than the glorifying of him by faith with thanksgiving, and the keeping up of a childlike confidence

in him, as our reconciled Father in Christ; and nothing quickens faith more than sure promises of answers to our prayers. Thus God will certainly hear and deliver us, since all his dealings with us are designed to strengthen us in faith and to save our souls. Why, then, should we be afraid in times of trouble? Ought we not rather to draw near to God in prayer and thanksgiving, and glorify him even beforehand, confidently believing that we shall certainly meet with new deliverances and fresh accessions to our faith?

To what a stubborn frame
Has sin reduced our mind!
What strange, ungrateful wretches we,
And God as strangely kind!

Turn, turn us, mighty God,
And mould our souls afresh;
Break, sovereign Grace, these hearts of stone,
And give us hearts of flesh.

Let old ingratitude
Provoke our weeping eyes,
And hourly as new mercies fall
Let hourly thanks arise.

AUGUST.

AUGUST 1.—*Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.* Isa. iii. 10. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.* Ps. xxxvii. 37.

MANY are for having that first which is not to be expected till the end: they would be glad of the triumph, but will not fight; the time of waiting for the Lord seems to them too long. But for the most glorious promises we must often wait the longest. Jacob, though indulged with more precious promises than Esau, was obliged to wait longer for their accomplishment; and how many ages rolled away before the promise of Christ, the greatest of all, was accomplished! "It shall be well with the righteous, and the end of the upright is peace;" but for the present they may remain in heaviness through manifold tribulations. When their faith, love, and patience are tried enough in

the furnace, then the acceptable year shall come, and the blessed days of joy will appear.

Great God, I would not ask to see
What in futurity shall be:
If light and bliss attend my days,
Then let my future hours be praise.

Is darkness and distress my share?
Then let me trust thy guardian care;
Enough for me if love Divine
At length through every cloud shall shine.

Yet this my soul desires to know,
Be this my only wish below,
"That Christ is mine!" This great request
Grant, bounteous God, and I am blest.

Aug. 2.—*Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.* Ps. xxvi. 2. *Search me, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

Would David, the man after God's own heart, not trust himself, but present his heart to the Lord to be tried? Much less can or ought we to trust our hearts. "For he that trusteth in his own heart," says the wise man, "is a fool." (Prov. xxviii. 26.) We have more

reason to be afraid of our own hearts than of all other enemies. It is not necessary for us to know when or by what means the Lord searches our hearts; but every one that is really in a state of grace, and walking in the fear of the Lord, will pray to him to search the heart and to deliver him from every wicked way. The Holy Spirit has various ways of searching the hearts of his people, and makes use of different means with the same person. We are not to limit the mode nor the extent of his operations; but it is our duty to pray that he will in every thing guide us in the path that leadeth to everlasting life. Some may be wrought upon very differently from others; but the whole administration of these things is under the direction of infinite Wisdom, and tends to manifest the glory of Divine grace in our salvation.

Lord, search my soul, try every thought:
Though my own heart accuse me not
Of walking in a false disguise,
I beg the trial of thine eyes.

Aug. 3.—*Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?* James iii. 11. *And what*

concord hath Christ with Belial? 2 Cor. vi. 15. *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.* Eph. v. 11. *Neither be partaker of other men's sins.* 1 Tim. v. 22. [This is done when men act hypocritically and when they connive at iniquity.] *If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use.* 2 Tim. ii. 21. *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* 2 Cor. vii. 1.

OTHERWISE we shall surely go backward. We cannot in reality stand still. O Lord, let my soul ever be pressing on after thee. Let nothing throw me off my guard, nothing tempt me to indolence or delay; let every thing contribute to advance my progress in the Divine life!

My lips, no more the bitter taste endure
Of sin's foul waters and its streams impure;
My soul, turn only to the crystal flood
That flows so freely from the throne of God.

God and this world cannot united stand;
The cords that bind the two are cords of sand:
The souls that after grace and glory move
Themselves are pure, their eyes are fix'd above.

Aug. 4.—*Strive to enter in at the strait gate.* Luke xiii. 24. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Phil. ii. 12. *Forgetting those things that are behind, I reach forth unto those things which are before.* Phil. iii. 13.

He that feeds only upon Christ, and yet with fear and trembling works out his own salvation, is in the right way, the former preventing discouragement and the latter presumption. Grant, O Lord, that I may still continue to fight the good fight of faith and never look back on the flesh-pots of Egypt, and "rather choose to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season." May the painful death which thou sufferedst on the cross have an abiding-place in my heart, that thereby unbelief and slavish fear may be destroyed on the one hand, and security on the other,—that I may walk, at all times and in all places, with holy and filial reverence, as in thy presence! Amen.

Strong is the Lord of Hosts;
And in his mighty power
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

From strength to strength go on;
Wrestle, and fight, and pray;
Tread all the powers of darkness down,
And win the well-fought day.

AUG. 5.—*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.* Ps. li. 10. See Ezek. xi. 19, 20

THIS petition will be fulfilled, if earnestly presented in the name of our Redeemer; and surely the object of the petition is unspeakably important. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) In regard to justification, this is completed by Christ's obedience unto death; but in regard to sanctification, our hearts, though the subjects of it, are, in their best state, such that we have continual need to pray, "Create in me a clean heart." O Lord, may thy blood and Spirit cleanse and sanctify me thoroughly from all my sins! Amen.

Create, O God, my powers anew;
Make my whole heart sincere and true:
Oh, cast me not in wrath away,
Nor let thy soul-enlivening ray
Still cease to shine.

Restore thy favour,—bliss divine!
Those heavenly joys that once were mine;
Let thy own Spirit, kind and free,
Uphold and guide my steps to thee,
The wanderer's home.

Oh, cleanse my guilt and heal my pain;
Remove the blood-polluted stain:
Then shall my heart adoring trace,
My Saviour-God, the boundless grace
That flows from thee.

Aug. 6.—*Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* Ps. xxxiv. 8. *How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasure.* Ps. xxxvi. 7, 8. *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.* Luke i. 53. *The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.* Prov. xxvii. 7.

The man who can eat and drink, who can walk about or stand still, does not claim any particular merit on that account. 'Tis the same with the believer, who eats and works by faith. O Lord, may we ever, as children, hunger and thirst after righteousness! Blessed be

thy glorious name forever, that of thy free grace thou dost justify and save us, and, though we are so poor, dost make us rich in heavenly treasures!

He that is full from honey turns aside,
Nor prizes aught his Maker has supplied;
But he who oft to hungering awakes
Enjoys his food,—yea, crumbs he gladly takes.
Wherefore a hunger for the gifts of heaven
Stands high among the blessings God has given.

Aug. 7.—*See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. Be ye, therefore, not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.* Eph. v. 15, 17. *That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence.* Phil. i. 10. See also Luke xii. 36.

Believers have nothing more at heart than the will of God: being once convinced of that, they immediately hasten to fulfil it, at all hazards; but sometimes they cannot come to a thorough knowledge of the same without great conflicts and much patience, (Heb. x. 36,) having to encounter the errors which prevail around them, their own prejudices, and the occasional darkness of the Divine dispensations

The Lord, however, will carry us through. Yes, Lord, this thou hast done innumerable times. Oh that I might trust thee also for the time to come, and not be so weak in faith any more.

Belovéd self must be denied,
The mind and will renew'd,
Passion suppress'd, and patience tried,
And vain desires subdued.

Flesh is a dangerous foe to grace
Where it prevails and rules:
Flesh must be humbled, pride abased,
Lest they destroy our souls.

Lord, can a feeble, helpless worm
Fulfil a task so hard?
Thy grace must all my works perform
And give the free reward.

Aug. 8.—*If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.* 1 Peter iv. 14. *Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.* Luke vi. 23. *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven: but whosoever shall deny*

me before men, him will I deny before my Father who is in heaven. Matt. x. 32, 33.

EVERY real Christian must expect persecution from the world; and, though he should guard against giving needless offence by self-will, or rash conduct of any kind, yet should he not seek to shun the cross by what some men call prudence, but which in reality is a mean compliance with the world. On the contrary, he should be willing to suffer every thing rather than to hurt the cause of God in the least. We should openly confess Christ our Lord, and not mind being called fools by the wicked, as we know that at last they will call themselves by that name. Let us not, therefore, care for the approbation and praise of the world, but count it a great honour to bear the reproach of Christ.

Bless'd are the sufferers who partake
Of pain and shame for Jesus' sake:
Their souls shall triumph in the Lord;
Glory and joy are their reward.

The Lamb shall lead his heavenly flock
Where living fountains rise,
And love Divine shall wipe away
The sorrow of their eyes.

Aug. 9.—*Take heed to your spirit.* Mal. ii. 15. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?* Jer. xvii. 9.

Sinful lusts may become so inactive as to seem quite dead; but, if we grow careless, they spring up again on a favourable occasion, and sometimes appear in a spiritual shape and take a spiritual name. Thus, though the carnally-minded delight exceedingly in sensual indulgences, yet, in order to acquire the reputation of being perfect, they will sometimes endure great mortification. Therefore we ought always to be jealous of ourselves, lest we become satisfied with a partial conversion, and thus exhibit, in our spirit, language, and behaviour, a mass of inconsistencies. The flesh is never more dangerous than when it covers its lusts with the veil of apparent holiness and zeal.

Weak and irresolute is man:
The purpose of to-day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
To-morrow rends away.

Bound on a voyage of awful length
And dangers little known,
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the distant coast:
The breath of heaven must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost.

Aug. 10.— *Oh, send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill and to thy tabernacles.* Ps. xliii. 3. *The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* Prov. iv. 18.

The wiser we are in our own conceits, the more negligent we are in prayer and more destitute of true wisdom and faith. The Lord gives sight to the blind, and to the babes who pray for it. Therefore the deepest humblings go before the greatest blessings. O my blessed Saviour, since I am always blind and ignorant of myself if I am not guided by thine eyes, I desire always to look up to thee and do every thing under thy direction.

Prevent me, lest I harbour pride,
Lest I in my own strength confide;
Show me my weakness; let me see
I have my power, my all, from thee.

Enrich me alway with thy love;
My kind Protector ever prove;

The signet put upon my breast,
And let thy Spirit on me rest.

Assist and teach me how to pray;
Incline my nature to obey;
What thou abhorrest let me flee,
And only love what pleases thee.

Oh, may I never do my will,
But thine, and only thine, fulfil!
Let all my time and all my ways
Be spent and ended to thy praise.

Aug. 11.—*Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* 1 Peter i. 13. *By grace ye are saved.* Eph. ii. 5.

To rely on grace, and desire to be saved only by free grace, is a sweet exercise; but, so far from being practised enough, we have all need to learn the prayer of the Publican better still, since the Pharisee is ever busy to creep in again. But care must be taken that we do not build our faith only upon the sweet enjoyments of the grace of God in our hearts, but also upon grace in the heart of God as it is procured by Christ and promised to us through Christ. For which reason God sometimes denies us sensible enjoyments, that true faith

may begin to act like itself and depend upon nothing but free grace in Christ. And this we have also boldness to do, should we ever seem to fall short of the due measure of faith, godly sorrow, and repentance. For, since there is no merit to be placed in these things, there is no certain measure prescribed to all, but it is enough truly to hate sin, to desire grace, and sincerely to enter upon the Christian race.

'Tis not by works of righteousness
Which our own hands have done,
But we are saved by sovereign grace
Abounding through his Son.

'Tis from the mercy of our God
That all our hopes begin;
'Tis by the water and the blood
Our souls are wash'd from sin

Raised from the dead, we live anew;
And, justified by grace,
We shall appear in glory too,
And see our Father's face.

Aug. 12.—*Fervent in spirit.* Rom. xii. 11. *I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.* Rev. iii. 1

You cannot pray with fervor? Ask God to help you to discover the reason. Humble your-

self and acknowledge all your infirmities and sins before his face. Come as you are, empty and poor and miserable, but at the same time reconciled in Christ, justified, clad in the robe of salvation, holy and accepted in the Beloved. And as you discover that Christ, and, with him, the Father and the Holy Ghost,—in a word, that all, all things,—are yours, and that you need only come and take and enjoy, that will make your faith more lively, and you will grow more fervent in spirit, more earnest and importunate in prayer. Lord, let me ever grow in grace! keep me unblamable before thee, and ever watchful unto prayer!

For thee, my Life, desire is ever swelling;
To thee alone I fly;
I yield my heart: receive it as thy dwelling:
Without thee, I must die.

Oh, let me not be dead while I am living,
I plead before thy face:
The stream, the stream of Life's glad waters giving,
Renew me by thy grace.

My heart from love of earth do thou deliver;
Warm me with heavenly love;
That praise to thee, of all good gifts the Giver,
With every breath may move.

JG. 13.—*Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.* Ps. xxxii. 9. *If ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* 1 Peter i. 17.

READER, dost thou believe that there is a God, and that he will shortly judge thee for every evil action thou hast done and for all the secret iniquity of thy bosom? How, then, canst thou meet thy Judge, unless thy heart be changed and thy sins pardoned? There will be no opportunity of dissembling, excusing, or escaping them. Begin, therefore, in time to consider how thou must appear before that awful judgment-seat. The door of mercy is yet open. Call upon the Lord Jesus for repentance and pardon, before the door shall be shut and thou be lost forever.

O God, mine inmost soul convert,
And deeply on my thoughtful heart
Eternal things impress;
Give me to feel their solemn weight
And tremble on the brink of fate
And wake to righteousness.

Be this my one great business here:—
With serious industry and fear
  My future bliss to insure,
Thine utmost counsel to fulfil,
And suffer all thy righteous will,
  And to the end endure.

Aug. 14.—*Be strong and of a good courage: I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Only be thou strong, and very courageous. Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.* Joshua i. 5, 6, 9.

God calls upon us to be strong in faith; and strong faith will make men cheerful and courageous and enable them to overcome strong difficulties. Therefore, if thy feet and heart are bound for Canaan, trust in the Lord to carry thee safely through. Feeble as thou art, go on, and fear nothing; for God is with thee. He that has but this one care and fear—not to displease him—needs not care for nor fear any thing else. His safety is insured in the promise of God, who will keep him continually in all things.

Awake, our soul, away, our fears;
  Let every trembling thought begone;

Awake, and run the heavenly race,
And put a cheerful courage on

True, 'tis a strait and thorny road,
And mortal spirits tire and faint;
But they forget the mighty God,
That feeds the strength of every saint.

From Him, the overflowing Spring,
Our souls shall drink a fresh supply;
While such as trust their native strength
Shall melt away, and droop, and die.

Aug. 15.—*Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!* John i. 29. *These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.* Rev. vii. 14, 15.

He that washes himself continually in the blood of Christ does not make light of sin, but detests it above all things; for what can be more abominable than sin, since it cannot be taken away but by the blood of the Son of God? This humbles true believers and makes them watch against sin; and, if it has not the same effect on thee, reader, the state of thy soul should make thee tremble. Talking of

the blood of the Lamb, and yet trifling with sin, cannot agree together, but show a false or a deceived heart.

Behold the Lamb of God, who bore
Thy burden on the tree
And paid in blood the dreadful score,
The ransom due for thee?

Look to him, till the sight endears
The Saviour to thy heart;
His piercéd feet bedew with tears,
Nor from his cross depart.

Look to him, till his dying love
Thy every thought control,
Its vast constraining influence prove
O'er body, spirit, soul.

Look to him, as the race you run,
Your never-failing Friend:
Finish he will the work begun,
And grace in glory end.

Aug. 16.—*Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.* Matt. vi. 2. *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* 2 Tim. iv. 8.

For this crown faith strives. And because this faith justifies, the world is ready to say,

"This is all right: I believe too." But where is the conflict and the conquest? The world replies, "I rely on Christ and on grace." But Canaan was also a free gift of grace; and yet it was not taken without conflicts. Moreover, as worldly people do not understand the wickedness of their hearts, they do not rely on grace alone, but on their own outward forms of godliness, whilst self-love and pride still reign within them.

What fruit, O my heart, shall they reap for their pains
Who labour alone for the world and its gains?
Vexation and sorrow shall be their reward
Who live only for earth, all forgetting the Lord.

Be thy life all devoted to God and his will,
And sheaves of rejoicing thy bosom shall fill;
Walk in faith and in love, God himself shall be given,
Thy reward upon earth and thy glory in heaven.

Aug. 17.—*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.* Rev. xvi. 15. *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into*

the city. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Rev. xxii. 12, 14, 20, 21.

SIN is ever present with us: therefore we must always put on Christ himself and be clothed in his blood and righteousness: otherwise there is no peace. Upon Christ all the affections of the soul must be concentrated; and, in all the progress of our religious experience, the central point of our trust must be this,—that we have forgiveness of sins through Jesus' blood. When it pleases God to reveal this truth himself to the soul, then it seems as if the heavenly paradise were thrown open for our enjoyment.

Come with thy Spirit, O my Lord!
On thee, my Life, I call;
Fulfil the promise of thy word;
Grant me thyself, my All.

Eternity comes on apace:
Do thou my steps attend;
And, when I leave my earthly place,
Let me to heaven ascend.

AUG. 18.—*And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.* Rev. xxi. 5–7.

WE must thirst for the Lord and receive him by faith, in order to be justified. But to drink, for the confirmation of our faith, with joy and gladness, out of the wells of salvation,—this belongs to our sanctification. So this exalted spiritual joy and firm assurance and delightful experience of grace do not really belong to justification, though they are the fruits of it. They grow out of it, and always in proportion as we thirst and drink out of the well of the water of life.

A place in the city of Zion I have,
Where the waters of life ever flow:
The Lord is the fountain; I drink of the wave;
I wash, and am whiter than snow.

Oh, here at this fount I would ever remain,
Whence the rivers of grace freely pour,
Still washing and drinking again and again,
Nor would wander nor thirst any more.

The word of the Lord is engaged upon me
Both glory and grace to bestow:
Grace now is my portion, both daily and free,
And through grace on to glory I go.

Aug. 19.—*Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.* Exod. xxiii. 20. *And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there.* Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. See also Ps. xxv. 12; Heb. x. 20.

Jesus is himself the Way, the new and living Way. He renews our strength, so that we can walk and not faint; and as we go forward we can sing, The way is open and safe, even the way through the valley of the shadow of death. Lord, let me never wander from this way of life; let no temptation ever seduce me from thy word, nor destroy my faith, nor quench in me the spirit of prayer. Help me to get through safely, yea, in all things to come off more than conqueror.

From Zion's way of holiness my feet shall ne'er depart,
Since thou, O blest Redeemer, thou my fellow-traveller art.
Break through the foe's devices all, and shield me from his wrath,
And lead me, by thy faithful hand, along the narrow path.
When I am weak, let thy good word refresh my soul, and guide,
Until I reach the home of peace for which my heart has sigh'd.

AUG. 20.—*Surely they are my people, children that will not lie.* Isa. lxiii. 8. *And in their mouth was found no guile.* Rev. xiv. 5. *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.* Mark x. 14.

HE that relies upon his own personal merits, and undertakes their cultivation, can accomplish nothing but patchwork. Men want to make themselves holy; but to do this they have no power. You must first despair of yourself and all your works, come to Jesus, without guile, reserving nothing for yourself; in short. be converted and become as a little child. For our adoption and our baptismal covenant can be forfeited and broken, not only by gross sins,

but also by our yielding to the delusions and the spirit of the world. Therefore the man who has been wont to rely upon his own virtues must also be born again, must become a child, childlike, but not childish: that is, he must reverence holy things, and not affect, as many do, so familiar an air in speaking of Jesus and his precious blood.

In gentle children we may see
Fair emblems of simplicity:
On loftiness they are not bent;
With lowly things they are content.

The thoughts that in their hearts arise
Shine forth so promptly through their eyes;
Their eyes, free from deceitful art,
Are still the windows to the heart.

So thou thyself wast once a child:
The same become again, so mild,
If thou in Zion's bliss wouldst share;
For only children enter there.

Aug. 21.—*These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God. Rev. xiv. 4, 5

As long as Peter presumed to depend upon his own strength, he professed to be willing to follow Christ even unto death. But when he became truly humble, and as his own end approached, upon exhorting the brethren to patience in tribulation, he referred always to the will of God. "If need be," he said, (1 Peter i. 6.) "If the will of God be so," (1 Peter iii. 17.) "According to the will of God," (1 Peter iv. 19.) How sharply does he thus reprove all displays of sanctimoniousness, of selfish presumption, of spiritual pride! There is many a one who may seem ready to make himself a martyr, and yet he cannot meekly endure so much as one word of contradiction.

O Lamb of God, deliver me;
From vain presumption set me free;
Draw me with cords of love.
Oh, let my heart right true be found,
And, whilst I tread this earthly ground,
My eyes be fix'd above.

And where thou leadest, for thy sake,
I step by step would also take,
Through thick and thin pursue.

My rule be thy blest will, not mine;
For they who do thy will shall shine
In heaven, the pure, the true.

Aug. 22.—*They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God.* 1 John iv. 5, 6.

What is it that serves most clearly to show us the corruption of the world and to make us loathe it for its bitterness? It is the cross of Christ. And yet men pervert the cross and misuse it as an occasion for indulging their love of the world and their carnal security,—even as the spider, that extracts venom from the fairest flowers.

Begone, dull care! youth must be cheerful-hearted!
Yet let repentance now thy heart engage.
I shall repent when youth is all departed.
Youth's habits oft remain confirm'd in age.
I shall have time, at least, in my last hour.
How? hast thou made a covenant with death?
My latest sigh shall have prevailing power.
O soul! vain is this hope, an empty breath.
I surely shall have time for preparation.
How it may go with thee thou canst not know.
And for the chief of sinners there's salvation.
Only for those who here repentance show.
Without dispute, I ought to be awaking.
Awake at once; for what can interfere?

The flesh is weak; too hard the undertaking.
It were not hard, if thou wert but sincere.
Who can be holy but for one short hour?
God never will too heavy tasks impose.
I am too weak: where shall I find the power?
In Christ alone, from whom grace freely flows.
How shall I find this grace? By fervent praying;
And fix not on thy sinful self thy stay.
If I do thus, what would the world be saying?
Oh, rather ask what God himself would say.
To which of these, then, shall thy choice incline?
To God? or to his enemies and thine?

Aug. 23.—*Charity seeketh not her own,—endureth all things. Charity never faileth.* 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7, 8.

My Father, this is my heart's desire,—that I may love thee and my neighbour sincerely and in truth. Oh, teach me the wonders of thy love in Christ Jesus, and cause me to feel the power of that love in my own soul. When I lean upon the cross, upon thy faithful breast, O my Saviour,—when I taste the goodness of that grace wherewith thou hast so highly favoured me, poor, wretched sinner,—how can my heart remain hard and unloving? Oh, this melts and overcomes me entirely!

Oh let thy love be true and fervent:
They who alone obsequious smile,
As smiles the fawning, flattering servant,
They show but self-love all the while.

Simplicity forever keeping,
True Charity ne'er seeks her own;
Her benefits on others heaping,
Who thankfulness have never shown.

For curses, blessings she returneth;
To do God's will she gives good heed;
Her heart with kindness ever burneth;
She loveth not in word, but deed.

From public gaze she oft retireth,
Amidst the lowly goeth forth;
To earthly honours ne'er aspireth;
All these to her are little worth.

Aug. 24.—*If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.* 2 Tim. ii. 5. *Until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.* Matt. xi. 12.

If those cannot expect to be crowned who strive but not lawfully, what must become of those who do not strive at all? O Lord, vouchsafe to direct and to strengthen my soul, that I may glorify thee by resisting and overcoming all my spiritual adversaries. In humble re-

liance on thy grace, I will go forth and fight the good fight of faith, till the happy hour arrive when I shall joyfully exclaim, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth me the victory. through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Stand up, my soul; shake off thy fears,
And gird the gospel-armour on:
March to the gates of endless joys,
Where thy great Captain-Saviour's gone.

What though thine inward lusts rebel?
'Tis but a struggling gasp for life:
The weapons of victorious grace
Shall slay thy sins and end thy strife.

Then let my soul march boldly on,
Press forward to the heavenly gate:
There peace and joy eternal reign,
And glittering robes for conquerors wait.

Aug. 25.—*So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.* Rom. ix. 16. *Thou hast a little strength.* Rev. iii. 8. *Go in this thy might. Surely I will be with thee.* Judges vi. 14, 16.

A little strength in the Christian is the strength of God through Christ the second

Adam, and consequently stronger than the power of Satan and the first Adam, should it seem ever so strong. Nay, it is the death of the old man already, and kills him by degrees more and more, till at last, when we drop this body of sin, it will destroy him entirely. Believers in such a state may think themselves weaker than before they had any grace, not being able now to advance in their new and better course so rapidly as they did in the course which they have, through grace, forsaken. They no longer swim with the stream, experiencing no resistance, but have incessantly to contend against the most determined opposition. Thus they are made to feel their own insufficiency, and learn both to ascribe all their past progress to Divine grace and to rely on its continued communication for their future safety and improvement. Therefore we must not give over praying and hoping in this case; but, as it is only the loving-kindness of the merciful Redeemer that preserves and strengthens the poor and feeble, we rather ought to be more earnest in drawing near to him with all our misery, weariness, and apprehensions.

AUG. 26.—*If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.* 2 Peter ii. 20.

SOME affirm that experienced Christians meet with no strong temptations and feel no evil suggestions from within, and, of course, no striving against the same; but it is quite the contrary; for young converts are engaged chiefly in escaping from the outward pollutions of the world, while those who are farther advanced find it necessary to strive more immediately against their inward and spiritual iniquities. Therefore take heed to your spirit, though your meaning be ever so good and your assurance ever so great. Be not high-minded, for fear of falling. The least sin may, unawares and by degrees, draw thee into many others, so that thou mayst at last be entangled in such a manner that, without great watchfulness, it will be impossible to extricate thyself. Therefore be not deceived; flee all occasions of sin. Say not within thyself, "It is a light matter: it only concerns outward things, which do not belong to the essence of Christianity." Such language betrays a most unbecoming levity, or,

rather, a seared conscience. If we indulge any degree of improper conformity to the world, we so far supply the enemy of our souls with the means of ruining them, and may well fear that our latter end will prove worse than the beginning.

Aug. 27.—*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* Rom. xii. 18.

There is much contest in the world about property; but believers, taking Christ for their only Property, (a property of which none can dispossess them,) have, in him alone, immense treasures and lasting peace. And since, therefore, wrath and anger turn into nothing but disquietness, and are punished by themselves, why dost thou, having so much to enrich and delight thee, suffer thyself to be easily moved by them? The least provocation, it may be even a single word, will stir up the corruption of thine heart, so as to change thy countenance and make thee speak unadvisedly. But consider how God bears with thee, and what an abomination anger is. It is the venom of the old serpent. As for thee, called as thou

art to bear the image of God and bring forth the fruits of the good Spirit, thou must follow the lamb-like mind of Christ. For this purpose it is necessary,—First, To avoid all occasions of strife. Secondly, If quarrels arise, to bridle our tongues. Thirdly, to suffer patiently when we are wronged. Fourthly, Immediately to offer up fervent prayer, and thus to quench the sparks of fire before they break out into a flame. This is the easiest and the only method to prevent great troubles and lead a peaceful, happy life; for anger carries in itself uneasiness, and love a sweet satisfaction.

Aug. 28.—*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* Heb. x. 19, 22.

Christ has forever purged our sins by himself; "for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) To this sprinkling of the blood of Christ all believers, even the weakest, are to come, in order to receive the forgiveness of sins. The

blood is said to be sprinkled, to show the need of its application to the conscience by the Holy Spirit. In this purple fountain the believer daily washes: it is his element and life. Thus he "lives by the faith of the Son of God," who also loved him, always pleading his merits before his heavenly Father; thus he keeps his conscience pure and easy.

And dost thou say, "Ask what thou wilt?"
Oh, I would seize the golden hour:
I pray to be released from guilt,
From shame, and sin, and Satan's power!

More of thy presence, Lord, impart;
More of thine image let me bear;
Erect thy throne within my heart,
And reign without a rival there.

Give me to read my pardon seal'd,
And from thy grace to draw my strength,
To trace thy boundless love reveal'd
In all "its height, and breadth, and length."

AUG. 29.—*Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so*

also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. Coloss. iii. 12–14. *Judge not.* Matt. vii. 1. *And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour.* Zech. viii. 17.

RATHER think, "It is perhaps only my own suspicion; my neighbour may not have intended it as my suspicion interprets." Charity endures all things and always hopes for the best. In our judgment we may very rarely be right, but many, many times erroneous. This is very apt to be the case with those whose opinions are hastily formed and rashly expressed.

When wrath and impatience begins,
  Then I would remember the Lamb,—
All his patience with me and my sins;
  For I then can bear much in his name.

Should arrogance raise me on high,
  By myself let it quickly be seen
Both what a weak creature am I
  And what a poor wretch I have been.

To thee, Meek of Spirit, I turn:
  When the faults of my friend I descry,
May I see my own weakness, and learn
  Not at all on myself to rely.

For the spirit that lowliness spurns
Full many fierce storms shall appall;
But who to humility turns
Shall never know terror nor fall.

Aug. 30.—*Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe; and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.* Ps. cxix. 117.

This I can do, however, only by following the Spirit; for the flesh still lusteth, and every grace is cultivated only by striving against sin, by self-denial, by mortifying the flesh through the power of faith. How? In the midst of such conflicts the soul, deeply humbled, flies to the blood of Christ for pardon and strength. Thus it obtains peace and power; it can do all things with cheerfulness, the conflict becomes easy, and it can proceed at once even to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. O Lord, let my fond desires ever be towards thy word.

Nothing that on earth I see
To my heart can joy afford;
But when thou art near to me.
That is my delight, O Lord!
My heart shall say the same though all the earth be gone.
O Jesus, blessed name! Thou art my joy alone.

To none other can I give
Lodgment in this heart of mine:
Thou alone shalt in me live;
Lord, my heart is wholly thine.
Thee only, Son of God, I call my joy and crown;
Thou boughtest me with blood, and I am all thine own

Blessed Saviour, now draw nigh;
Bid my sorrows all depart:
This is my unceasing cry:—
Jesus, come! come to my heart!
My soul shall patient be; yet grant me this request:—
That when from earth I flee I may with Jesus rest.

Aug. 31.—*Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away, O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock.* Sol. Song ii. 10–14.

O Lord, how often has it been winter with me! but thou hast always quickened me again. Grant that by these experiences I may be so used to thy ways as always to expect the best from thee in every thing, and to have only this one care,—how I may please thee as thy bride and dove and be accepted through thee with

thy Father. Let my faith be so strengthened by all thy various dealings with me that at last I may have boldness, and find complete rest in thy wounds, my crucified Saviour, where there is room for the greatest of sinners,—even for me.

The voice of my Belovéd sounds
Over the rocks and rising grounds;
O'er hills of guilt and seas of grief
He leaps, he flies, to my relief.

Gently he draws my heart along,
Both with his beauties and his tongue;
"Rise," says my Lord; "make haste away:
No mortal joys are worth thy stay."

The Jewish wintry state is gone;
The mists are fled, the spring comes on;
The sacred turtle-dove we hear
Proclaims the new, the joyful year.

And when we hear our Jesus say,
"Rise up, my love; make haste away!"
Our hearts would fain outfly the wind
And leave all earthly loves behind.

SEPTEMBER.

SEPTEMBER 1.—*Be not conformed to this world.* Rom. xii. 2. *And love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.* 1 John ii. 15, 17.

READER, whose will dost thou do? Examine thyself. Perhaps thou thinkest that to love the world and do its will cannot be a great sin, because many reputed honest men and Christians do the same. Nay, but, for thy soul's sake, consider what the Scripture says:—"If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Without this love of the Father, thou hast no faith; and, being destitute of faith, thou hast no part in Christ, and, consequently, no life and salvation. Consider, further, whether thou dost not love the world above either God or thy own soul. Hast thou not more than a hundred thoughts about the world for one of God or of thy soul?

Dost thou not talk a hundred times more about the world than about God or thy soul? Is not thy pursuit continually after the world, to the neglect of God and thy soul? If so, the world is thine idol; thou lovest not God, and art murdering thine own soul. Alas, what a piteous case thou art in! The Lord have mercy on thee!

Ye sinners, seek His grace
Whose wrath ye cannot bear;
Fly to the shelter of his cross
And find salvation there.

SEPT. 2.—*Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.* 1 Peter i. 14, 15. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles.* 2 Peter i. 10; 1 Peter iv. 3.

NONE can be so sure of salvation as to be forever free from fears and doubts: confidence itself has its conflicts: therefore all diligence is required in order to attain a prevailing [illegible] and to meet death with tranquillity. We ought at all times to guard particularly against presumption, since we do not know what

temptations await us. It becomes us also to suppress the feeling that despises weaker Christians, and the language that would urge them beyond what they are able to bear,—ever remembering that our own experience is not to be stretched into an absolute rule for others; lest the doctrine of assurance, though a source of comfort, prove a torment to them who have not yet attained it. Let all who have received a measure of grace be thankful, yet not rest in it, but press forward, fighting the good fight of faith, till they lay hold on eternal life.

My soul with thy whole armour arm;
In each approach of sin alarm,
  And show the danger near!
Surround, sustain, and strengthen me,
And fill with godly jealousy
  And sanctifying fear.

SEPT. 3.—*Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding.* Prov. iii. 5. *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.* Prov. xxx. 32.

MEN often show the violence of self-will even when they are engaged about the most

sacred things. Hence arise divisions, parties, and sects, with all kinds of human ordinances, tending more and more to the establishment of spiritual tyrannies. O Lord, arise! Heal thou the breaches of Zion! He who rejects the advice of discretion, and turns aside from the counsels of experienced men and of such as understand the devices of Satan, shall be thoroughly sifted by the enemy, lifted up to the high places indeed; but, if he ever learn wisdom at all, it must be through deep and painful humiliations.

O mortal, whither wouldst thou rise?
From self-will, oh, refrain!
It yields no fruit that God would prize;
It yields thee naught but pain.

To wisdom's counsels give good heed:
Thou hast thine own ways trod:
That was thine own self-will indeed,
And that was not of God.

However much the Lord may bless,
He keeps us gentle still:
Oh, naught will prosper here unless
We have a gentle will.

SEPT. 4.—*Repent ye and believe the gospel.* Mark i. 15.

LORD, do thou thyself create us anew in Christ Jesus; for this is to repent, to have a new mind. To sincere souls it must ever be a comfort that God only requires faith of us, —even that which he has himself previously given; for faith is the gift of God: this is to accept of free grace, and to obtain pardon and mercy without money and without price. This faith is not a vain conceit. It is always preceded by true repentance, which fills us with grief and godly sorrow for our sins. Through this sorrow of the heart, the lusts of the world, that once were pleasant, become bitter like gall to our taste. To repent means to hate sin and to forsake it all,—to turn from it with the whole heart. The true penitent regards himself as deserving hell; yet he pleads for mercy, mercy only. If thy heart be so engaged, then shall faith be given thee,—that faith which in the name of the Lord overcomes the world and sin; for if only one sin yet hold dominion over you, your faith is not genuine.

Oh, deceive not yourselves: when the last sands are falling,
All your own righteous works have no power to save.

Repent, seek the cross, and, on Christ alone calling,
At once a new heart and true faith you shall have.

SEPT. 5.—*Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.* Ps. li. 12. *There shall ye suck; ye shall be borne upon her sides and be dandled upon her knees. And as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.* Isa. lxvi. 12, 13. *Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?* Micah ii. 7.

SALVATION belongs to every one that panteth after it. If at all times thou seekest help of thy Father in heaven, if thou holdest fast to the promises and art thereby comforted, this is more pleasing to God than it is to a mother when her child is pacified in her arms. From what other source can such strong consolation be derived?

Dear child, within thy mother's arms
Thou shalt rest, sweet and calm:
Why should the darkness breed alarms,
Since I thy Guardian am?

Dear child, on me cast all thy care:
The cares that trouble thee
Thou mayest not with others share;
Yet tell them all to me.

Dear child, come, welcome to my love:
Whate'er weighs on thy breast,
I will the heavy load remove,
And I will give thee rest.

SEPT. 6.—*Now also, when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not.* Ps. lxxi. 18. *Oh, keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.* Ps. xxv. 20, 21. *Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am He, and even to your hoary hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you.* Isa. xlvi. 3, 4.

GOD receives all his people into a union far more intimate than that which connects the parent with the child. A mother may forget even her sucking child; but the eyes of God are upon his people for good continually: they are graven on the palms of his hands and dwell securely in his heart. They may expect every thing from him; and we shall evermore please him in proportion to the strength of our confidence in him. I would therefore "be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by

prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make my requests known unto him," (Phil iv. 6,) always trusting that he will as certainly carry me through the difficulties to come as he has done through the difficulties which I have already met,—so that I may even give him thanks for it beforehand. O Lord, grant that I may display more and more of this well rewarded affiance.

My God, my everlasting Hope,
I live upon thy truth:
Thine hands have held my childhood up
And strengthen'd all my youth.

SEPT. 7.—*Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these; for if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings*, &c. Jer. vii. 4, 5. See also John iv. 24; Rom. xii. 1; James i. 27.

ONE of the most pernicious and at the same time successful artifices of Satan is that by which he induces men to substitute extensive knowledge and an assurance of their own making, not witnessed by the Spirit, for true faith. Thus deceived, they trust in some out-

ward form of worship, or in the Church-communion they have with real believers, and those strong and perhaps frequent feelings which they call Christian experience, but which in them are unattended with a change of heart. As long as this inward change is wanting, we read, and pray, and attend the sanctuary, and receive Divine ordinances, to no purpose. We must be renewed in our minds; and then, and then only, shall we prove, by our words and deeds, that we are the living temples of God.

Be this my chief, my only care,
My high pursuit, my ardent prayer,—
An interest in the Saviour's blood,
My pardon seal'd, and peace with God.

But should my brightest hopes be vain,—
The rising doubt, how sharp its pain!
My fears, O gracious God, remove,
Confirm my title to thy love.

Search, Lord, oh, search my inmost heart,
And light and hope and joy impart;
From guilt and error set me free,
And guide me safe to heaven and thee.

SEPT. 8.—*Forsake me not, O Lord my God; be not far from me. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.* Isa. liv. 10–15.

SUCH as have never felt spiritual distress cannot relish this word of promise. But they who have been brought out of great misery by this or any other word of promise applied to their hearts by the Holy Ghost will henceforth take hold of it and prize it. Yea, they should firmly believe (even without a present feeling of its comfort) that God will certainly perform his promise. He is a God that changes not, and a God in covenant with his people. Therefore he will not forsake his people, but order all things for their good, and conduct them safely through their pilgrimage, though violent enemies assault them and mighty tempests fall upon them. For this the Divine faithfulness stands engaged.

My God,—for yet my trembling heart
Would fain rely upon thy word.—

Fain would I bid my fears depart,
And cast my burden on the Lord.

Thou seest the tempest of my soul,
Those restless waves of fear and sin:
Thy voice can all their rage control,
And make a sacred calm within.

SEPT. 9.—*Lean not unto thine own understanding.* Prov. iii. 5. *Be not wise in your own conceit.* Rom. xii. 17. *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.* 1 Cor. iii. 19.

WHOEVER desires to know the will of the Lord, and prays earnestly for instruction, shall certainly know his will. But he must not be wise in his own conceit, nor lean to his own understanding, nor expect that the wisdom or learning of this world will explain the things of God. He must not seek to reconcile the word to his lusts, but combat his lusts by the word. In short, he must come to Jesus for instruction, with great simplicity of mind,—and not come for a month or a year, but sit all his life at the feet of Jesus, to receive instruction from him. Lord, make me jealous of myself; enable me to go in and out with prayer; and keep me from all errors that may hurt my soul.

Thus saith the wisdom of the Lord:—
Bless'd is the man that hears my word,
Keeps daily watch before my gates,
And at my feet for mercy waits.

The soul that seeks me shall obtain
Immortal wealth and heavenly gain:
Immortal life is his reward,
Life and the favour of the Lord.

But the vile wretch that flies from me
Doth his own soul an injury:
Fools that against my grace rebel
Seek death, and love the road to hell.

Sept. 10.—*And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light; to go by day and night.* Exod. xiii. 21. *And the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them; and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea, upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left.* Exod. xiv. 19–22. *And all the Israelites passed over Jordan on dry ground.* Joshua iii. 17. *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* Rom. viii. 28

The flesh is very apt to venture confidently into dangerous excesses. On this account it is

necessary, indeed, every day, that we should be kept under some trial, some burden or other,—that we should be restrained by hedges or walls. Are you visited with any calamity or trial? Then think, This is the burden or the wall that is appointed for me this day, that I may not stray off and so fall into the power of the enemy.

Oh, why should cares alarm me,
Or death itself, at last?
For they, lest aught might harm me,
Like walls are round me cast.

Trusting thy loving favour,
All sin, the world, and hell,
I'll face; for thou, my Saviour,
Through floods wilt guide me well.

And when, my journey ended,
Life's dreary scenes are past,
Thy faithful arm extended
Shall help once more at last.

Sept. 11.—*And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy*, &c. Exod. xvii. 11, 12. *And he* [*the king of Israel*] *shot. And he* [*Elisha*] *said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from*

Syria. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And he [*Elisha*] *said, Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times: then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it.* 2 Kings xiii. 17–19.

THE greater the wrestling of prayer, the greater the victory. Every prayerful ejaculation or sigh is a sling-stone and a wound for the old man, who often stands out as a Goliath before us. He must be slain. But we can overcome him only by degrees. O Lord, make me earnest in prayer, and let all my desires be for thy word!

Sin! the world! how soon it gaineth
All the power it may please
In the heart which prayer restraineth,
And in sleeping takes its ease!

Let thy hands be elevated;
Oft to God send up thy cry;
Sin shall be right soon abated,
World and devil, all shall fly.

Every sigh, an arrow speeding,
Strikes the foe right through the heart;
But the hands so weak, unheeding,
Hang, when upwards they should start.

Faint not, then, at least in crying,
And, whoe'er the foe may be,
Pour thy heart all out in sighing,
And no foe shall conquer thee.

SEPT. 12.—*And he bowed his head, and gave up the Ghost.* John xix. 30.

To rest always in the death of Christ, and to lay hold of Christ the crucified, by a faith that shall ever wax stronger and stronger,—this is the one thing needful. This will be to us strength and marrow. We shall find it to be the very life of the spirit, both of the Old and of the New Testament.

Neither in heaven nor all the earth around
Could an atonement for our sin be found.
O Lamb of God, thy precious blood alone,
So freely shed, can for our sin atone!
How deep our fall! how heavy was the load
Of sin upon thy head, O Lamb of God!
Lord, I would gaze upon that grief of thine,
Remembering that the guilt was mine,—all mine
Let thy soul's travail waken godly grief
In me, then send, oh, send me sweet relief.
So let the light shine from thy loving face
That I may see myself a child of grace.
On me be thy good Spirit's seal impress'd,
That I may on the true foundation rest.
Grateful remembrance of thy bitter pain
I would forever in my heart retain.
I would forsake all sin, lest it might be
Another wound, or piercing nail, to thee.
For thy dear name I all would sacrifice,
That I may in thy resurrection rise.

Now let me, Lord, in thee find truth and grace,
And naught on earth my heart from thee shall sever
And when at last I stand before thy face,
The bliss be mine, and thine the praise, forever.

SEPT. 13.—*Our Father which art in heaven.* Matt. vi. 8. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

THEY who are so loose and extravagant in their views of gospel truth as to believe that everybody is a child of God, even in the sense of the gospel, thereby do much harm. The Apostle Paul had very different views. The heart must first be broken and wholly emptied of the consolations and love of the world. Christ is revealed as the Comforter only of them that mourn. Every soul must first experience true sorrow for sin, though not all in equal measure,—not that it may thus atone for sin, but that it may become tender, that it may long for the consolations of the gospel and be capable of receiving them. To experience the full power of the gospel is a work of time,

Some are over-hasty about being converted. This is often a mere work of the lips. They speak much and loudly about assurance and spiritual joy; but they have never yet experienced it in their hearts. In the eyes of him whose heart has come out from the world, what the world most values seems to be vanity, and many of its peculiar pleasures are deeply tainted with guilt.

God says to them who heavenward haste,
"Uncleanness do not touch nor taste."
Wouldst thou the pearl of glory win?
Cast all away that leads to sin.

My Father, let this aim be mine:
Adopt me as a child of thine,
And, though my heart oft sinking be,
Still grant me cheerful thoughts of thee.

SEPT. 14.—*Give us this day our daily bread.* Matt. vi. 11. *But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* Matt. vi. 33.

IN this fourth petition I find how to make sure of my daily bread. I have it for this day, in answer to prayer. If I know not whence it is to come to-morrow, yet to-morrow I shall

pray this prayer also, and I shall have it again. So for every day,—if I only have faith. Many persons show and acknowledge the deficiency of their faith in God's providence, according to the first article of the Creed. But very few will acknowledge the deficiency of their faith in Christ according to the second article; and yet it is just in regard to this article that men are most deficient. There is scarcely one in a hundred who has a genuine vigorous faith in Christ. Philemon v. 6.

Faith in God should grow still stronger;
Were such faith here, then never fear:
We should want no longer.

Has thy faith its portion taken
In God's blest word? None such the Lord
Ever hath forsaken.

He who righteousness first seeketh
Shall always find how sure and kind
Is all the Saviour speaketh.

Him the Lord, his promise keeping,
Both clothes and feeds, gives all he needs,
Even while he's sleeping.

Lord, thou knowest what is wanted;
And, as I pray for bread this day,
Lo, through thy love 'tis granted.

So I fly at once to thy faithful breast,
And there both my soul and my
Body shall rest.

SEPT. 15.—*Our conversation is in heaven.* Phil. iii. 20. *Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.* Luke x. 20. *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.* Col. iii. 2.

A CHRISTIAN, being only a traveller through the world, must expect a traveller's fare,—bad roads, bad weather, and bad accommodations; but, since his journey will soon end and he will then enter the celestial city, all his actions, sufferings, prayers, and conversation turn that way. O Lord, grant that mine eyes may be always fixed upon this mark, and that I may regulate all my desires and doings accordingly, so that I may engage in nothing that is unsuitable to the anticipation of heaven.

Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me,
When shall my labours have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?

Why should I shrink at pain and woe,
Or feel at death dismay?

I've Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day.

Apostles, martyrs, prophets, there
Around my Saviour stand;
And soon my friends in Christ below
Will join the glorious band.

Jerusalem, my happy home,
My soul still pants for thee:
Then shall my labours have an end,
When I thy joys shall see.

SEPT. 16.—*To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* Acts x. 43, iv. 12. *Thy name is as ointment poured forth.* Cant. i. 3. *The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe.* Prov. xviii. 10.

IN this name we should draw nigh to the Father in prayer, and not approach him with a strange fire of our own, kindled from the fancied merit of devotion, and he will draw nigh to us again. (James iv. 8.) He will certainly grant our petitions, "and we shall receive, that our joy may be full." (John xvi. 24.) "Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call

upon thee." (Psalm lxxxvi. 5.) All the promises are yea and amen in Christ; so that every believer may say, "The Lord will receive my prayer." (Psalm vi. 9.) "Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer nor his mercy from me;" for "he hath dealt bountifully with me." Psalm lxvi. 20 and xiii. 6.

Lift up your eyes to the heavenly seats
Where your Redeemer stays:
Kind Intercessor! there he sits,
And loves, and pleads, and prays.

Petitions, now, and praise may rise,
And saints their offerings bring:
The Priest with his own sacrifice
Presents them to the King.

Jesus alone shall bear my cries
Up to the Father's throne:
He—dearest Lord!—perfumes my sighs
And sweetens every groan.

SEPT. 17.—*In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* Ps. xvi. 11. *And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* Rev. xxi. 2–4, 10, 12.

O MY dear Saviour, look upon me in mercy. Thou seest what earthly desires and unmorti-

fied tempers are yet found in me; and, though I cry unto thee daily, mine enemies still prevail over me. Yet thou art almighty to save, and hast promised to cast out none that comes unto thee. Let me, then, experience the power of thy grace in raising me up to more newness of life, in stirring up prayer and strengthening faith, in creating hungerings after righteousness and thirstings after God, and in bestowing a right heavenly mind upon me; that my soul may be as a bride prepared and adorned for her husband. Give me also a frequent taste below of those pleasures which are at thy right hand for evermore, that my heart may be kept waiting and eagerly looking for thy coming.

Oh, the delights, the heavenly joys,
The glories, of the place
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace!

Lord, how our souls are all on fire
To see thy blest abode!
Our tongues rejoice in tunes of praise
To our incarnate God.

And, while our faith enjoys this sight,
We long to leave our clay,
And with thy fiery chariots, Lord,
To fetch our souls away.

SEPT. 18.—*Watch and pray: let us be going.* Matt. xxvi. 41, 46. *Remember Lot's wife.* Luke xvii. 32. *This is the way: walk ye in it.* Isa. xxx. 21.

To be kept from self-righteousness on one hand and from false liberty on the other is to be led in the right Christian way. But how shall I find this way? Blessed Jesus, thou art the Way. Teach me, then, to walk in thy strength, to live in thy faith, to gaze much upon thee, to cleave firmly unto thee and abide ever in thee: so shall I experience the liberty of thy gospel, which yields no license for sin, but brings joyful deliverance from its power. For, when my heart rests on thee, it cannot rest in the flesh and seek to fulfil its lusts; but, being delighted with thy beauty and glorious love, it ceases to wander from thee, and I become watchful, fervent, and animated.

When my forgetful soul renews
  The savour of thy grace,
My heart presumes I cannot lose
  The relish all my days.

But, ere one fleeting hour is past,
  The flattering world employs
Some sensual bait to seize my taste
  And to pollute my joys.

Then I repent, and vex my soul,
That I should leave thee so:
Where will those wild affections roll,
That let a Saviour go?

Show my forgetful feet the way,
That leads to joys on high:
There knowledge grows without decay,
And love shall never die.

SEPT. 19.—*Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* Gen. xvii. 1. *Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.* Eccl. xii. 13, 14.

MANY things now accounted indifferent will in the day of final investigation be condemned. Hence the necessity of circumspection, even when there is no apparent danger. We can scarcely consider our ways with too much attention or scrutinize our hearts with too much rigour. Under the vain presumption that certain pursuits and amusements are innocent, thousands advance into the snares of Satan and the very flames of hell. Conscience perhaps interposes with a scruple, till overborne by the suggestion that the measure contem-

plated, unquestionably agreeable, is also harmless: to this the heart, already attracted and engaged, yields a willing consent, and thus guilt steals in and ruin follows. O Lord, grant that I may have a quick and clear perception of right and wrong, and that I may indignantly revolt from the latter, however pleasing to the flesh, and eagerly prosecute the former, at whatever cost and hazard, that so my leaf may not wither, and whatsoever I do may prosper.

Within thy circling power I stand;
On every side I find thy hand;
Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
I am surrounded still with God.

Oh, may these thoughts possess my breast,
Where'er I rove, where'er I rest,
Nor let unruly passions dare
Consent to sin, for God is there!

SEPT. 20.—*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* John iii. 3.

IN this solemn manner does our Lord teach us that no outward form of religion will suf-

fice, but that we must be renewed by the Spirit of God, and have our hearts changed, or we cannot enter into the kingdom of God. How, then, can men who rely on their self-produced morality hope to be saved? Will Christ recall his assertion? Surely not. Much serious attention is due to this subject, so many being prone to satisfy themselves with an exemption from gross faults, or, at best, with such a performance of duties as may be compatible with an unregenerate state. All having sinned, conversion is necessary for all; and this results from that inward and spiritual change to which our Lord refers when he says, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The second Adam shall restore
  The ruins of the first:
Hosannah to that sovereign power
  Which new-creates our dust.

When from the curse he sets us free,
  He makes our natures clean;
Nor would our Saviour come to be
  The minister of sin.

His Spirit purifies our frame
And seals our peace with God:
Jesus and his salvation came
By water and by blood.

SEPT. 21.—*Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.* Ps. xlii. 11. *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Rom. viii. 18.

BELIEVERS, we are here assured, may be in great distress, but, though much perplexed, and often discouraged, they are secretly held up by faith and brought off conquerors. If God had commanded us to pray and hope only till a certain time, and his help had failed to come within that time, we might justly despond. But, since he requires us to hope even to the end, or the last moment of life, this should keep us from impatience and despair; for, though he should tarry even to the end, believers will certainly find him then to be faithful to his promise. He may try our faith and patience to the utmost, but he cannot break his

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own word. Dear Lord, whatever load thou art pleased to lay upon me, enable me to wait, in faith and prayer, till the joyful hour of deliverance come.

And can my vile, ungrateful heart
Still harbour black distrust and fear?
Oh, bid these heavy clouds depart;
Bright Sun of Righteousness, appear!

Let thy enlivening, healing voice,
The kind assurance of thy love,
Relieve my heart, revive my joys,
And all my sins and fears remove.

SEPT. 22.—*Be not soon shaken in mind.* 2 Thess. ii. 2. *I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.* 1 Cor. ii. 2. *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Col. ii. 3.

O MY blessed Saviour, enable me to rest humbly and quietly in thee, avoiding all such novelties as might breed presumption, distract my thoughts, and cause my heart to swerve from thee. Whoever has tasted the sweetness of thy word will be satisfied with it; and better it is to improve in the life of faith and power of godliness than in new words, forms,

and professions. May the Lord quicken me by the truths that have been established of old, and humble my heart evermore, so that I may receive them better and abide in that which I have heard from the beginning! Novelty often proves the bane of souls, and is always calculated to unsettle and distract them. It is work enough for the meek and quiet to keep within the bounds divinely prescribed, and effectually to centre in God. How can such enjoy true rest who, from a vain curiosity to know every thing, are continually longing to hear new doctrines? Lord, save me from this mental fluctuation, and make me determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. Amen.

Be all my heart and all my days
Devoted to my Saviour's praise,
And let my glad obedience prove
How much I owe, how much I love.

SEPT. 23.—*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.* PS. li. 2. *The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.* 1 John i. 7.

UNDER the ceremonial law, all things were purged with blood, and without shedding of

blood there was no remission: thus it is impossible that any one sin should be taken away, except by the blood of Christ Jesus. May this teach me the heinousness of sin, keep my heart humble and my conscience tender! For how dreadful must the stain of sin be, since nothing but the blood of Christ can wash it out! Blessed be God for opening this fountain, and keeping it open day and night, for the vilest sinners. May my polluted soul be daily washed in it, and so receive both peace and strength!

My dear Redeemer and my God,
  Fountain for guilt and sin,
Sprinkle me ever with thy blood,
  And cleanse and keep me clean.

Wash me, and make me thus thine own;
  Wash me, and mine thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone,—
  My hands, my head, my heart.

The atonement of thy blood apply,
  Till faith to sight improve,
Till hope shall in fruition die,
  And all my soul be love.

Forever here my rest shall be,
  Close to thy bleeding side;
'Tis all my hope and all my plea:—
  "For me the Saviour died!"

SEPT. 24.—*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* Ps. xc. 12.

How well would we be protected against the temptations of foolishness and vanity, were the thought to be familiar to our hearts that even this day might be our last! Lord, teach me to consider my end and the measure of my days! And, as I seek to be well prepared for thine appearing, let me neither desire, nor omit, nor say, nor do, any thing that may occasion regret in that hour. How long I may yet wander here, I know not. Yet sooner or later death shall hurry me away. Oh that my heart were yet more intent upon heavenly things! Lord, make me as thou wouldst have me to be: may I hourly be ready to receive thee!

How false the plea! how vain the cry!
"I shall repent whilst dying;
When on the bed of death I lie,
Then God will hear my crying!"
Alas! thine end may come so suddenly,
Poor sinner! then who shall thy helper be?

Oh, watch and ask, in every thing,
With prayer unintermitted,
Should God my soul to judgment bring,
Could I now be acquitted?
Would I be saved should God now take my breath?
Thus endless life thou shalt obtain through death.

SEPT. 25.—*What lack I yet?* Matt. xix. 20. *Yet lackest thou one thing.* Luke xviii. 22. *One thing is needful.* Luke x. 42.

THIS one thing needful is, to have Christ; but he must first serve and treat us with his grace before we can draw strength from him to serve him again. We must account him our Food, and hunger for him, before we can feed upon him or do any thing for him. And, as Christ is the Author of faith, he gives it increase out of his fulness; and faith, being somewhat strengthened, begins to work for him, though it be but faintly. Yet we become Christians, and remain in a state of salvation, not by what faith works, but by what it receives. For, though a feeble faith will perform feeble works, it can receive a whole and perfect Christ,—which is the one thing needful.

Religion's sacred lamp alone
  Unerring points the way
Where happiness forever shines
  With unpolluted ray.

There Jesus, Source of bliss Divine,
  Our glorious Leader, reigns:
He gives us strength to hold our way,
  And crowns the traveller's pains.

Dear Saviour, let thy cheering smile
My fainting soul renew:
Then shall the heavenly Canaan yield
A sweet though distant view.

Be thy almighty arm my stay,
My guide through all the road,
Till safe I reach my journey's end,
My Saviour and my God.

SEPT. 26.—*And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.* Mark xiii. 37. *Awake to righteousness, and sin not.* 1 Cor. xv. 34.

DROWSINESS and indolence in prayer often assail even the believer. But the consciousness of it is his greatest grief. Lord Jesus, grant unto me the spirit of grace and of supplication, (Zech. xii. 10,) that I may steadily look upon thee, and see myself in thee, to be washed and sanctified and justified. Let me ever be fervent in spirit and watchful in prayer!

Let not the world rock thee to sleep,
O precious soul! still watch and pray;
For dangerous temptations creep
So close along the narrow way.

How oft, when heart and lips grow still,
Do languor's creeping chills arise!
On Jesus' grace (it is his will)
Keep firmly fix'd heart, lips, and eyes.

Wouldst thou advance? be on thy guard;
Fight off this heavy indolence;
On every side keep watch and ward
Against the world and carnal sense.

Oh, let thy lamp be ever bright;
Stand always ready for thy Lord;
Then, should he come by day or night,
He'll surely bring thee rich reward.

SEPT. 27.—*What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in him.* Phil. iii. 7–9.

THIS was the life and constant mind of St. Paul. The expressions "in Him," "in Christ," "in the Lord," occur in his writings continually. I choose them also for my staff and my song in the wilderness: they direct me to my great tower, my strong fortress, my sweet paradise, mine only element and life. Here

may I take up mine abode forever, and may the Lord keep me steadfast! "It is good for us to be here;" for this is Pisgah, the mount of the Lord, where Jesus, being transfigured, reveals his glory to his disciples. Here we should build our tabernacle, and here may death find me at last!

Had I ten thousand gifts beside,
I'd cleave to Jesus crucified
And build on him alone;
For no foundation is there given
On which I'd place my hopes of heaven
But Christ, the corner-stone.

Possessing Christ, I all possess,—
Wisdom, and strength, and righteousness,
And holiness complete:
In his great name I dare draw nigh
Before the Ruler of the sky
And all his justice meet.

SEPT. 28.—*What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* Acts xvi. 30, 31.

FAITH is not confidence of our own making, but it is God that produces it in a broken and repenting heart. This faith purifies us, cruci-

fies the old Adam, overcomes the world, effects a change through all our faculties and feelings. This is the genuine testimony and doctrine of the Lutheran Church. It is not enough to think or to profess that we have faith. We must examine ourselves and prove by our works that we are in the faith. Luther himself attained to this faith through much tribulation and sorrow of soul. (See his Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.) If we feel something of this, and apply to Christ by prayer for faith and grace, we have a sure mark of faith already; for, if we did not believe, we should not thus mourn and pray. He that daily applies to the blood of Christ for cleansing has true faith and hope already, though he is but weak and does not taste any joy.

Ye dying souls, that sit
In darkness and distress,
Look from the borders of the pit
To Christ's recovering grace.

Sinners shall hear the sound;
Their thankful tongues shall own
Their righteousness and strength are found
In Christ the Lord alone.

In him shall Israel trust,
And see their guilt forgiven;

God will pronounce the sinner just
And take the saints to heaven.

SEPT. 29.—*Abstain from all appearance of evil; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.* 1 Thess. v. 22; Phil. ii. 15; Luke xvii. 1, 2.

LORD, I desire to shine in good works, the genuine fruits of faith: therefore will I give myself up to thee to purge me, that I may bring forth more fruit. Looking upon myself as thine, I would not only abstain from evil, but from the very appearance of it. Some are satisfied with knowing that they *are* blameless, and care not what others think of them; but, for the gospel's sake, I desire to *appear* blameless before others, lest some offence should come through me,—which, as far as in me lies, I would prevent. Thy children, O God, are as lights in the world. Oh, pour thy grace—that heavenly oil—in my lamp, and so trim it that it may give light unto all around, that they may be led to glorify thy holy name.

O Lord, my stubborn will subdue;
Create my ruin'd frame anew;
Dispel my darkness by the light:
Into all truth my spirit guide,
But from my eyes forever hide
All things displeasing in thy sight.

Be heaven now my soul's abode:
Hid be my life with Christ in God;
My spirit, Lord, be one with thine:
Let all my works in thee be wrought,
And fill'd with thee be all my thought,
Till in me thy full likeness shine.

SEPT. 30.—*Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.* 1 Peter iv. 1.

THE Lord often seeks by means of our bodily sufferings to overcome and to remove the evil that is in our hearts. So he strengthens us in our conflicts with sin and helps us to the victory. However, what above all other things will enable us to hate sin and to overcome it in true repentance is the conviction that Christ himself suffered and died for us. From the cross of Christ alone can genuine repentance flow, since that at once breaks the heart and

binds it up again. Unless you have a contrite heart, all your glorying about the cross and the blood and the death of Jesus is only solemn trifling.

Must I submit, through all these weary hours,
To suffering and pain?
Let me to patience summon all my powers:
These trials are my gain.

To prove his children thus is God's wise pleasure:
Praise him, my heart and voice!
For by the rod he sends a precious treasure,
And I shall yet rejoice.

To sin yet more my thoughtless heart was tending:
This pain shall work the cure;
For, of my grief whate'er may be the ending,
God's love will make me pure.

OCTOBER.

OCTOBER 1.—*Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed.* Rev. v. 5. *The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* 1 John iii. 8. *Sin shall have no dominion over us.* Rom. vi. 14.

MANY complain that, though they will not turn back, yet they have no power to advance further. If this be thy case, my reader, remember that the enemy of souls will discourage thee. But go thou on praying, and venture evermore upon the Lord. Consider how he awakened thee at first, how often he has since heard thy prayers and assisted thee in many hard struggles. Surely he will help thee now also. If that will not do, begin, as it were, afresh; acknowledge thyself guilty in every respect, and, as the chief of sinners, plead for mercy, and be instant in humble supplications, looking at the same time upon God as a reconciled Father through Christ, who is willing to pardon thee and bless thee in spite of all

thy misery: then thou wilt soon make a better progress. To despair of our own strength is good; but we must never despair of the power of Christ, who is risen from the dead and will enable thee to overcome with him at last. He will certainly help thee in the due and best season.

Hell and thy sins resist thy course,
But hell and sins are vanquish'd foes;
Thy Jesus nail'd them to the cross
And sung the triumph when he rose.

Oct. 2.—*Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? He chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* Heb. xii. 6–10.

To these chastenings belong outward afflictions, which are precious means and sanctified to believers. O my dear heavenly Father, thou art pleased with a true childlike confidence; but I have still a distrustful heart, which is soon overwhelmed by the stroke of sudden calamity. Help me always to entertain the kindest thoughts of thee, and to fear no ad-

versity,--looking upon it as a token of love, and not of hatred, and really believing it to be intended for my good. Whatever thy providence may order, let me only be convinced of thy fatherly affection and fall in with thy wholesome and kind designs.

Why should I shrink at thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears,
Or tremble at the gracious hand
That wipes away my tears?

No: rather let me freely yield
What most I prize to thee,
Who never hast a good withheld
Or wilt withhold from me.

Thy favour all my journey through
Thou art engaged to grant:
What else I want, or think I do,
'Tis better still to want.

Oct. 3.—*The entrance of thy word giveth light: it giveth understanding to the simple.* Ps. cxix. 130. *Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.* Ps. cxix. 133.

We may have a clear sight and a real taste of the gospel, and yet be soon deprived of the comfort of it again, if we do not walk in godly

simplicity and poverty of spirit; for Christ will have none but humble and childlike disciples. But, if we abide in Christ by a close and humble walk with him, we shall come to great and lasting assurance. For neither a sweet sense of the love of Christ, nor even faith itself in Christ, is the ground of our salvation, but Christ alone, received into the heart as the Saviour. Faith does not save, but enables us to receive the Saviour, and, with him, salvation. Nor does the most delightful sense of the love of Christ save us: it only shows that the Saviour is present with us. Now, the weakest true believer receives Christ as well as the strongest, though he reaps no present comfort from his faith. We must first believe before we can hope for pleasant feelings; and when we are favoured with such feelings, though we should be thankful for them, we must not make them the ground of our confidence.

I was a wanderer, lost and blind;
I sought for thee, but could not find;
Away from thy true light I turn'd
And follow'd that which falsely burn'd.
But now I bless thee, Source of Light,
That thou hast given me day for night:
Thy praise my thankful heart employ!
For thou hast brought me peace and joy.

Uphold me always in thy way,
And let my footsteps never stray
I would be swift to do thy will,
And neither wander nor stand still.
To body and to soul impart
Meek, weeping eyes, a fervent heart,
And let me beyond all things love
Thy service here, thy praise above.

Oct. 4.—*Thy gentleness hath made me great.*
Ps. xviii. 35.

It is not so easy a thing as men often suppose to maintain meekness and lowliness in the heart. He who has great gifts, but who has no great buffetings or other means of making him humble, is certainly in great danger of being lodged upon some very perilous height. This is especially the case when a man has little or no knowledge of the deceitfulness and corruption of his own heart,—when he imagines that he can dispose of sin and drive it away as easily as he would a fly. Such, indeed, is the presumptuous language of many. Illustrious heroes! Glorious victory! What shall be the fashion of the crown? Whoever makes light of the evil of sin makes light also of the merits and righteousness of Christ.

Thy progress is so slow! Dost thou inquire
Where lies the fault? In thine own lofty mind.
At what is great and grand thou dost aspire;
To meekness 'tis too hard to be resign'd.

On towering heights too oft art speculating,
In thine own reason's ways too prone to go,
On fruitless plans and schemes still calculating,
No wonder that thy progress is so slow.

It yet remains for God to send confusion
On plans by which thou hast deluded been:
Then shalt thou rise, when saved from thy delusion,
When meekness in thy heart, and love, are seen.

Oct. 5.—*Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my supplication.* Ps. lv. 1. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* John xvi. 23. *For the Father himself loveth you.* John v. 27. *Before they call, I will answer; and while they are speaking, I will hear.* Isa. lxv. 24. *Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.* Mark ix. 24.

He that converses much with God in prayer, and has a childlike confidence in his word, shall certainly be heard; and these answers of prayers are undeniable evidences of the truth, faithfulness, and love of God: they also greatly

strengthen his faith and promote an intimate acquaintance with God. The more we receive the more we are enlightened to see how much there is still wanting. This stirs us up to more frequent and fervent prayer; and the more we desire (believing that we shall receive it) the more shall we be gratified. Unbelief receives nothing, (Matt. xiii. 58;) but faith opens all the treasures of God and never goes away empty.

What various hinderances we meet
In coming to the mercy-seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer
But wishes to be often there?

Have you no words? Ah! think again.
Words flow apace when you complain
And fill a fellow-creature's ear
With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent
To Heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful song would oftener be,
"Hear what the Lord has done for me.'

Oct. 6.—*If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* Gal. i. 10. *Let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good, to edification.* Rom. xv. 2.

A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet. Prov. xxix. 5. *But he that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.* Prov. xxviii. 23.

We are ever inclined to extremes, even when God has begun to make us wise and to conform us to his own holy nature. At one time we are apt to run into a false activity for the conversion of others, trusting too much on our own sufficiency and strength; at other times we fall into remissness and languor. May the Lord, therefore, always guide me into the right course, so that I may walk in all singleness and humility of heart, as well as cherish true fervency of spirit and steadfast faith, that it may be said, "I believe: therefore do I speak." Grant, O my dear Saviour, that I may shine as a light and be useful to all about me, never seeking my own way, but only the salvation and good of others, with unfeigned love. Oh that thy love may constrain me in all things! Amen.

Father of mercies, send thy grace
All-powerful from above,
To form in our obedient souls
The image of thy love.

On wings of love the Saviour flew
To raise us from the ground,
And shed the richest of his blood,
A balm for every wound.

Oct. 7.— *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.* 1 John iii. 9. *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.* 1 John v. 7.

How can this be? How is this possible for us poor feeble creatures? But would God lay upon us any burdens too heavy for us to bear? It is also said, "and his commandments are not grievous." But if they are so to you, then you are without faith, not yet converted, not strong in the Lord. (Eph. vi. 10.) For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 John v. 4.) Call upon God to give you faith; search the Scriptures; turn away from sin and all occasions of sin, and from every thing that would hinder you in the exercise of faith. If you find this course difficult, still hold on. Pray, not only in the morning and evening or out of a prayer-book, but many times through the day fall upon your knees and pour out the supplications of your

own heart in prayer. If you should not find utterance at once, try it again and again, and persevere: you will soon obtain freedom and find peace. Otherwise not. Of this you may be sure. Now, Lord, I have never prayed so earnestly for any thing as for faith; and thou wilt give me faith and keep me in the true faith, by thy own power, until the end. Amen.

Lord, grant me faith, for which I pray,
And make me stronger day by day.

Oct. 8.—*He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.* Matt. xxiv. 13. *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* Rev. iii. 11. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.* 1 Cor. x. 12.

He who stands fast in faith, and is of a cheerful temper, must not magnify the measure of his own faith, nor undervalue that of weaker believers: such conduct would declare that he is even now fallen into pride and a contempt of his brother: therefore, however fast we may seem to stand, let us be wary and watchful. We are never so near a fall as when we grow self-confident. He who knows the nature and

power of temptations will not discourage the weak, nor insist too much upon particular enjoyments and sensible assurances, which are not the constant witness and marks of faith. The Holy Spirit himself is the Earnest and Seal of adoption, who is to be known not only by this joy, but by all his other fruits and operations. To trust too much upon feeling disturbs our peace as soon as it is gone; but to rely on the word of God preserves a settled assurance.

Child of heaven, by me restored,
Love thy Saviour, serve thy Lord:
Seal'd with that mysterious name,
Bear thy cross and scorn the shame:
Then, like me, thy conflict o'er,
Thou shalt rise to sleep no more,
Partner of my purchased throne,
One in joy, in glory one.

Oct. 9.—*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Rom. viii. 9. See also Rom. v. 7, 8, 14.

Not only gross wickedness, but even a carnal mind, and "the friendship of the world, is enmity against God." (James iv. 4; Phil. iii. 18, 19.) But how do I know that I have the Spirit

of Christ? I have prayed for him earnestly; this cannot be in vain. (Luke xi. 13.) He works also hatred and sorrow of sin, rebukes me, comforts me, and urges me to Christ and to prayer. This is his abiding witness, built upon the word of God, which no man of this world can have, but even the weakest believer enjoys. Having this privilege, I draw nigh, in the spirit of adoption, and fix my firm confidence in the parental care of the Almighty.

Holy and true and righteous Lord,
I seek to know and do thy will:
Be mindful of thy gracious word,
And stamp me with thy Spirit's seal.

My conscience purge from every blot;
Mine idols all be cast aside;
Rebuke each vain and sinful thought,
And crucify both self and pride.

Within me thy good Spirit place,
The source of health and love and power
And grant me such victorious grace
That inbred sin may reign no more.

OCT. 10.—*Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly.* Matt. xiii. 12. *The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* John iv. 14.

OF the remarkable increase of the kingdom of God, even from the least beginning, see Matt. xiii. 31–33, and that beautiful figure, Ezek. xlvii. 1–12. This well being opened, it highly concerns us to draw living water out of it, daily, by fervent prayer, and then it will spring up freely. But, reader, if thou beginnest to be slothful, and distracted with worldly cares, not abiding closely with Christ nor calling diligently on him, thy spirit will soon be dried up, and thou wilt scarcely be able with anxious groans to draw a single drop from this well. Therefore take heed to thy spirit, and, if thou desirest thine own comfort and God's glory, keep near the well's mouth and drink thereof abundantly.

The Lord my Shepherd is;
I shall be well supplied:
Since he is mine, and I am his,
What can I want beside?

He leads me to the place
Where heavenly pasture grows;

Where living waters gently pass
And full salvation flows.

While he affords his aid,
I cannot yield to fear:
Though I should walk through death's dark shade,
My Shepherd's with me there.

Oct. 11.—*Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth?* Ps. cxiii. 5, 6. *He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.* Luke i. 52. *Seek meekness.* Zeph. ii. 3.

Before the majesty of God the bright glories of heaven even are comparatively dim: how much inferior and more obscure are we dwellers on the earth, deeply polluted as we are with sin! There is still much sin hidden, even in the hearts of believers. As their experience advances, however, they become more sensible of their own infirmities. If you are not conscious of any infirmity, do not imagine on that account that you are already perfect. The fact that you do not see your own weakness only proves that it is more deeply seated

and dangerous, and that it may become the occasion of carnal security and of ultimate backsliding. Therefore be not high-minded, and do not trust to yourself. They who can manage so easily to dispose of sin are not sincere.

Lord, fill my soul with meekness, with meekness favour me!
"Still meeker, and yet meeker still," this shall my motto be.
I am a worm before thy face, and as such I would move;
For on the meek and lowly souls, on them abides thy love.
Thy frowns shall rest upon the proud, who force themselves on high;
But thou wilt save the meek of earth, and them wilt glorify.

Oct. 12.—*Through desire, a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.* Prov. xviii. 1. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.* Gal. v. 22, 23.

Intellectual and spiritual proficiency implies exertions which must for the most part be made amidst the tranquillity of retirement. There the soul escapes from the interruptions

so prevalent in the world, loses its prejudices, finds leisure to open the stores of knowledge, and communes most intimately with its God. Those persons have little prospect of attaining true wisdom who seek it only, or even chiefly, in the scene of public ordinances. The Lord was not in the strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice. (1 Kings xix. 11, 12.) The wisdom which he imparts is practical and engaging. The true Christian spirit is not sectarian, does not foster divisions and parties, is not given to boasting, resorts to no artifices, and does not move in crooked ways. By this we may prove the spirits.

May the grace of Christ our Saviour,
And the Father's boundless love,
With the Holy Spirit's favour,
Rest upon us from above!
Thus may we abide in union
With each other and the Lord,
And possess, in sweet communion,
Joys which earth cannot afford.

Oct. 13.—*He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.* Prov. xix. 17. See also Acts iv. 32–35; 2 Cor. ix. 6–15; 1 Tim. vi. 6, 10, 19.

Who would not be a cheerful giver? Faith always goes and helps itself out of the treasury of God, where there is an exhaustless store, although we have nothing. God bestows upon us both the blessings of his providence and the disposition to use them also in doing good to others. He puts honour upon his own gifts by our instrumentality: he crowns the work of his own hands. If riches increase, set not your heart upon them: believe what wisdom saith:—It is more blessed to give than to receive: lend unto the Lord: lay up treasure in heaven: you shall be lovely in the sight of God, and great shall be your reward.

When the poor and needy crieth,
  Help him with a cheerful heart:
God, on whom thy soul relieth,
  Will his love to thee impart.

Avarice! how hard it clingeth!
  Vanity! how much it wastes!
This no increase ever bringeth,
  That no blessing ever tastes

Hold the keys, Lord, of the treasure
From which all I need is lent;
All be used to do thy pleasure,
Nothing hoarded nor misspent.

Oct. 14.—*Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* Matt. xviii. 4. *Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth.* Ps. cxiii. 6.

Though we may have all knowledge, still, we must follow on, ever increasing in the knowledge and practice of humility. We may indeed have felt the weight of our condemnation,—yea, esteemed ourselves to be the chief of sinners: nevertheless, we are still in danger of the temptations of pride. Humility does not appear to recognise or to notice its own self. He who holds himself to be sufficiently humble is as yet far from being so. Lord Jesus, give me the spirit of humility, that I may be willing to be gentle and lowly, assuming no honours to myself, for to me they do not belong: all are thine.

Lord, grant me lowliness of heart,
That I may ever find

My portion in the better part,
Not in a lofty mind.

Oh, make me like a gentle flower,
Content with my own state,
Not aping lordly airs and power
Nor envious of the great.

My joy is in thy guiding hand;
My soul delights in God;
My heart beats high when through the land
His praise is spread abroad.

Oct. 15.—*As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.* Ps. xlii. 2, 3. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.* Isa. lv. 1, 2.

To seek righteousness by the law is a very different thing from hungering and thirsting after it. They who do the former seek after self-righteousness: they who do the latter pant after the righteousness of Christ; they are no more under the law, but under grace already. The childlike spirit, the new creature,

is already begotten within them: therefore it is that they do hunger and thirst; although their faith may not yet be able to comprehend the freeness of God's grace. We may receive and be in grace even before we attain to the full assurance of faith. Therefore let no weak and drooping soul be disheartened or discouraged. This may be very easily done. The devil himself ever seeks to discourage them. Rather say to such a soul, You are blessed already in the fact that you came hungering and thirsting, that you may buy and eat without money and without price.

See! Jesus stands with open arms!
He calls, he bids you come:
Guilt holds you back, and fear alarms:
But see! there yet is room!

Room in the Saviour's bleeding heart:
There love and pity meet;
Nor will he bid the soul depart
That trembles at his feet.

In him the Father reconciled
Invites your souls to come;
The rebel shall be call'd a child
And kindly welcomed home.

OCT. 16.—*How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?* Ps. xiii. 2. *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.* Phil. iv. 4. *Commit thy way unto the Lord: trust also in him, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.* Ps. lv. 22. *He hath done wonderful things: his counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.* Isa. xxv. 1.

"BE careful for nothing" is a wall against a thousand troubles. If, on the other hand, we give way to care and unbelief, they will spread their mischievous effects through all our actions. Therefore we ought, while prosecuting our lawful engagements, to rely in all things on the good providence and faithfulness of God,—firmly believing that he will never fail to carry us through the most difficult and intricate circumstances, though there should be ever so little probability in our own eyes.

Thou art my strength, my life, my stay:
Assist my feeble trust;
Drive these distressing fears away
And raise me from the dust.

Oh, let me call thy grace to mind
And trust thy glorious name:
Jehovah, powerful, wise, and kind,
Forever is the same.

Here let me rest, on thee depend.
My God, my hope, my all:
Be thou my everlasting Friend,
And I can never fall.

OCT. 17.—*We spend our years as a tale that is told; for it [our life] is soon cut off, and we fly away.* Ps. xc. 9, 10.

SOME count their life a pastime and their time here a market for gain: they sport and play and dance and run in quest of earthly enjoyments, as though life were all a holiday fair. God visits them, sends poverty, sickness, and tribulations through the land; but who ever feels or believes that it is God who thus asserts his displeasure? O man, let solemn thoughts of eternity move thy heart to true repentance, lest a worse thing come unto thee. It is no wonder that they who are distracted by the lusts of the world should be afflicted and unfruitful. Lord, may I ever abide in thee and be diligent in view of eternity!

Your days, like a tale that is told, pass away;
The lusts of the earth that beset you are vain;
Too precious your time for such trifling and play:
Then employ it that glory at last you may gain.

From the stream of your life, so fleeting and strange,
Draw forth every day something good that may last;
From the trifles of earth turn away: they shall change,
And no blessing shall leave when the vision is past.

Awake! seek thy constant refreshment in God;
Sow the seed that will yield stores of joy to thy soul,
Redeeming the time both at home and abroad,
And thy peace shall endure, like a river shall roll.

Oct. 18.—*We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* Acts xiv. 22. *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* Heb. xii. 1. *Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin.* Heb. xii. 4.

Some professors of religion are so careless that they never think of striving against sin, and some would seem to be so holy as to be above it; but here we are plainly told that sin must be opposed. What St. Paul speaks of the conflict between the flesh and the spirit is to the same purport. (Gal. v. 17.) And the most experienced Christians are witnesses to it. The word of God is said to be a sword, our prayers a wrestling, and our faith the victory. Thus our whole race consists in striving and conquering. There is always an

enemy to be encountered before we can make considerable progress in any thing that is good: none of our enemies are to be overcome easily, but some are very stubborn. Therefore courage and patience are required; and thus we may be sure to have the victory at last.

Awake, my soul; stretch every nerve,
And press with vigour on:
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown.

'Tis God's all-animating voice
That calls thee from on high:
'Tis his own hand presents the prize
To thine aspiring eye.

Oct. 19.—*We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.* Rom. iii. 24, 25.

How sweet are the words, "By grace ye are saved"! Here is an overflowing fountain of comfort and Divine strength. How little are the generality of vain and worldly people, who still feed upon husks, acquainted with these words! How little are they relished by the

self-righteous and merely moral professors of Christianity! But how deliciously does a poor hungering sinner fare upon them! There is hardly any thing less known and understood as to the power and experience than the mystery of Christ's suffering and dying for us, and justification by faith in him, though these things belong essentially to the gospel and they bring into the believer's mind peace and joy. When such is their effect, sin is not only deplored, but subdued; we feel painfully sensible of our own sins, but we feel, too, what it is to be thoroughly healed by the blood of Jesus.

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand
And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see
The burdens thou didst bear
When hanging on the accurséd tree,
And hopes her guilt was there.

Oct. 20.—*For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* 2 Cor. v. 1. *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and*

that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, &c. Job xix. 25, 27.

THE world esteems him to be a wise man who provides richly for his own house and amasses large possessions. Alas! the blindness of folly! He knows not at all who shall inherit it. He is the wise man who has his home and his treasure in heaven, who seeks to grow rich towards God and to direct all his household with a view to the inheritance that is incorruptible, eternal in the heavens.

How sweet to think the time must come
When we shall reach our heavenly home!
How sweet to think our home shall be
Where wave the palms of victory!

There we shall have joy's endless store,
No more be tried, oppress'd no more,
No more in sadness deeply groan,
For pain and tears and death are gone.

How pleasant joining hand in hand
In that our blessed fatherland!
How calmly, sweetly shall we rest,
Like children on the mother's breast!

How cheerfully each other greet,
As when the bride and bridegroom meet!
Oh, when that blessed world we see,
How sweet and pleasant all shall be!

OCT. 21.—*Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see; and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.* Jer. vi. 16. See also Matt. xi. 28, 29.

IN our own ways there is nothing but trouble; but, giving ourselves entirely up to be guided of God at his own pleasure, we may always be easy, since we know that by every step he brings us nearer to heaven. The only way to rest is the way of repentance and faith,—in which we consider ourselves, from the beginning even to the end of our Christian life, as utterly lost and condemned by the law, but as perfectly reconciled and justified through Christ. Thus to abide in him, to let him work alone, and be truly resigned to his ways, will certainly have the desired effect; while by the righteousness and workings of our own hearts we can never attain to it, and, which is worse, may be lulled into a false rest.

Lord, I believe a rest remains
To all thy people known,—
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns
And thou art loved alone;

A rest where all our souls' desire
Is fix'd on things above;
Where grief and pain and fear expire,
Cast out by perfect love.

Oct. 22.—*From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?* Mark viii. 4. *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow.* Matt. vi. 25, 34. *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.* 1 Peter v. 7.

The Lord knows how to furnish ways and means when we are entirely at a loss. Indeed, we are forbidden to perplex ourselves with anxious cares about to-morrow; for by doing this we would fail to enjoy the good things which our Father's hand supplies. Luther has spoken of what he calls child-faith. Now, if you are willing to trust in God only as far as your bread will last and no further, you have not this child-faith; that is, you are entirely without faith in Christ. For, if you cannot trust in him for the wants of your body, how can you confide in him for the interests of your soul? Faith does every thing, every thing,—prays, works, suffers, conquers, justifies, sanctifies, satisfies, all supplies.

He in whom the Lord abideth
Claims a blessed right as his:

In the Lord from care he hideth;
He can anxious cares dismiss.

In a bundle he can gather
All his wants, and, closely tied,
Roll them off on his kind Father;
He, of course, will all provide.

Oct. 23.—*Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Ps. ii. 12. *Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* Rom. x. 11. *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, ... but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.* Ps. i. 1–3.

Oh, precious promise! Here children and children's children may learn that there is nothing better than to fear God and nothing pleasanter than to walk in the way of his commandments. Whoever fears God shall find that no weapon formed against him can prosper. Whoever loves God's word is himself beloved of God. He who cleaveth unto wisdom shall dwell safely. Wisdom will open up to him all her treasures: she will treat him as an indulgent mother: she will attend him with the

purity of affection as a gentle bride. Lord, thou hast inclined me to walk in the way of thy statutes; and this, as an evidence of the new man, shows also that I am no more under the law. Let me still increase both in the knowledge and the doing of thy will. Let the old man grow weaker, and the new man stronger, day by day. To this end, let my delight ever be in thy word and my soul always esteem it as sweeter than my daily food. Amen.

Oct. 24.—*For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Rom. vi. 20–23. See also Ps. ii. 3.

Those who affect to be so free and independent that they can do just what and as they please are the veriest slaves of their own lusts and of the devil himself. They who refrain only from gross sins have, as Luther says. "only a half-way repentance," and very natu-

rally seek justification in their own works. The greatest of all our sins is original sin which, in the eyes of a believer, seems to grow more and more dreadful. So he cries out, Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great! Thus he abides in Christ, and so has perfect liberty, not to continue in sin, but to escape both from its curse and its power.

God for sin doth reckoning keep:
What you sow, that shall you reap;
As your work, such your reward:
Oh, mistake not! saith the Lord.
Avarice, where'er it reigns,
Visits men with sharpest pains
When they miss the smallest gains.
They to whom vile lust is sweet
Oft its bitterness must meet.
Hearts that for men's praises burn
Get reproaches,—poor return!
They the slaves of all may be,
And, whilst toiling wearily,
Grow impatient to descry
Streams of honour rising high.
At a word ambition's fled,
All its hopes are blasted, dead.—
Fly from sin; believe and know,
Sin—naught else—can work you woe.

Oct. 25.—*Whither shall I flee from thy presence?*
Psalm cxxxix. 7.

To Jesus, and I shall find rest; for both the law and sin continually cry out against me. Yet, not only as far as there may be direct testimony against me, but in every thing, I acknowledge myself to be a sinner,—a sinner who has reason to stop his mouth and is without excuse before God; and yet a sinner who is justified by faith in Christ and complete in him. Here, then, I find peace. As soon, however, as I begin to trust in my own righteousness or to indulge earthly desires, so soon uneasiness begins to arise. Lord, let all my desire be towards thee, that in thee I may have rest and peace.

It is neither in man, nor in time, nor in place,
To deprive you of peace, if your own heart is right:
Then yield up your heart to the God of all grace,
And your peace shall abound, both in darkness and light.

Out of God there is nothing on earth that can fill
These restless desires, that forever increase:
Midst the good things of earth but a moment they're still,
When they cry out again; and then where is your peace?

Where is it when sore disappointments arise,
When earth's fairest scenes all so quickly are past?
Oh, the man who for peace on things earthly relies
Might as soon on a ball's revolutions stand fast.

Oct. 26.—*Draw me: we will run after thee.* Sol. Song i. 4. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* Jer. xxxi. 3. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* John xii. 32.

The Lord loves us and is drawing us continually. If you do not feel this drawing, it is your own fault. Pray without ceasing that you may be able to see and to feel his gentle tender cords of love, that you may promptly yield yourself to them and always be fervent in spirit. This habit of praying is very needful, because we are always in want; and without being instant and earnest we cannot receive much. Therefore it is not a hard command, but a great benefit and privilege; as if God should say, "Thou art a poor child, always wanting something; but thou must always pray to me, and I will always hear, and assist, and draw thee after me."

Oh, draw me, Saviour, after thee:
So shall I run, and never tire;
With gracious words still comfort me
And be my Hope and whole Desire.
No lust can stir, nor guilty fear,
Nor worldly wish, if thou art here.

May I but as a little child
Still follow thee, nor ever rest
Till sweetly thou hast pour'd thy mild
And lowly mind into my breast!
Nor ever may we parted be,
Till I become as one with thee.

Oct. 27.—*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Eph. vi. 10. *Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my Rock and my Fortress.* Ps. lxxi. 3, xxi. 1–6. *For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm.* Isa. xxv. 4. *For upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.* Isa. iv. 5, 6; Zech. ii. 5.

Therefore Jesus says, Abide in me: that is, in my wounds. We do this when we cherish in our hearts the sincere sorrow of repentance

for sin,—when we grow more contrite, tender, hungering and thirsting, and so are more completely healed and strengthened by the blood of Christ. Otherwise our knowledge of Christ is dead and unprofitable,—like water spilt upon a rock.

My refuge is in Jesus' wounds,
The home of rest and peace,—
A safe resort when sin abounds,
When foes and wants increase.

Now, blessed Lord, with all my heart
Do I resort to thee;
And never more would I depart,
Till I thy face shall see.

Oct. 28.—*Abraham against hope believed in hope.* Rom. iv. 18.

O MY soul, thou hast not one single promise only, like Abraham, but a thousand promises, and many patterns of faithful believers before thee. It behooves thee, therefore, to rely with confidence upon the word of God. And, though the Lord delay his help, and the evil seem to grow worse and worse, be not weak, but rather strong, and rejoice; since the most glorious

promises of God are generally fulfilled in such a wondrous manner that he steps forth to save us at a time when there is the least appearance of it. He commonly brings his help in our greatest extremity, that his finger may plainly appear in our deliverance. And this method he chooses, that we may not trust upon any thing that we see or feel, (as we are always apt to do,) but only upon his bare word, which we may depend upon in every state.

Poor tempted soul, what canst thou do
Hope against hope, that God is true;
His nature in his name confess,
His wisdom, power, and righteousness.
The Lord, whom now thou canst not see,
Whate'er he is, he is for thee:
Accept, and thou shalt surely prove
That God in Christ is surely love.

Still, then, on Him thy spirit stay
Whose death hath borne thy sins away;
Conform'd to Jesus in his blood,
With him cry out, "My God, my God!"
My God, my God, I hold thee fast,
Till nature's latest pang is past;
Into thy hands my soul resign,
And then thou art forever mine.

Oct. 29.—*Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.* Gal. i. 16. *Be not slothful in business.* Rom. viii. 11.

The speediest and easiest method to accomplish our desire of overcoming what is evil and doing what is good is an immediate compliance with our first convictions, without conferring with flesh and blood. If we delay the work, we give room to our fellow-sinners from without, and to Satan and our depraved hearts from within, to persuade us to the contrary,—by which the flesh can easily renew its strength and the spirit will be weakened. And what will be the consequence of this, but that either we miscarry in our design, or that the conflict will be afterwards so much sharper, and the good work, if not stifled, dropped entirely? and, if it be done, it will not be done so completely, and with such singleness of heart, as it should be. If we narrowly watch our hearts and directly engage with every the least opposition when it stirs, then our enemies will not be so strong, and we shall have no reason to despair.

Jesus, mighty to renew,
Work in me to will and do:
Turn my nature's rapid tide,
Stem the torrent of my pride.

Take away my darling sin;
Make me willing to be clean;
Make me willing to receive
What thy goodness waits to give.

Oct. 30.—*Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.* Rom. vi. 13.

If God has my members as weapons and instruments in his hands, I shall certainly be able not only to work, but also to conquer, since he understands full well how to manage them. May the Lord only give me grace not to wind myself out of his hands! For how can a pen write alone, without being in the hand of a writer? It is true, indeed, that it is very hard—nay, impossible—to be really good, and to do all that is good, if we undertake it alone; but, God himself living and working in us and we truly delighting in him, it is very easy and pleasant. Therefore care is to be taken that our hearts may be always the working-place and our members the instruments of God, in

which and through which he can perform every thing himself.

My God I serve, to him alone
My thankful homage pay;
My only Maker, Christ, I own,
And him will I obey.

To him my members I present,
Which he will not refuse:
The meanest, basest instrument
His glory deigns to use.

Servant of sin too long I was;
But Christ has set me free:
Glory to his victorious grace,
Which freely ransom'd me.

Oct. 31.—*Ask, and it shall be given you. For every one that asketh receiveth.* Luke xi. 9, 10.

It does not read, "he shall receive:" no, he "receiveth" at once. Therefore my praying is nothing but receiving. Every ejaculation is but a grasping into the heart and the treasury of God. Oh, who would withhold prayer? who would not pray always and never faint? Are you truly waiting upon the Lord, and do you persevere in prayer? then do not think that you obtain nothing. This very perseverance is

itself a new gift; for if you had received no new blessing you would certainly not be so instant in prayer.

Come, Lord, in thy power, and make me more prayerful
And as thou hast promised, so grant me thy grace:
In the use of my talent my heart shall be careful,
That my fruit may endure in the light of thy face.

When thou to my efforts thy gracious help lendest,
The flames of devotion are a chariot for me;
When thou to my soul thy kind sceptre extendest,
Then I can draw nearer, still nearer, to thee.

For myself and for others I would pray without ceasing,
With prayer all my days and my labours would fill;
In thy praise let my heart and my voice still increasing
To thy presence draw near, nearer still, nearer still.

NOVEMBER.

NOVEMBER 1.—*At the beginning of thy supplications, the commandment came forth.* Daniel ix. 23. *Continuing instant in prayer.* Rom. xii. 12.

OH, comfortable and encouraging thought, that, in the same moment that the supplication arose from the prophet's heart, the gracious answer descended from the heart of his prayer-hearing God! When we call upon the name of the Lord with simplicity and holy earnestness of soul, the return of grace and love meets our request before it has ascended half-way to heaven; and when the Lord is going to bless us, he pours out a spirit of prayer, and raises a cry in our hearts after the particular blessing he is going to communicate. Therefore, when we are enabled to pray earnestly, we may be sure that blessings are coming and that we shall certainly receive in due time a seasonable and visible help. Then let us only go on, and put, as it were, one weight of prayers after

another into the scales of the sanctuary: surely our greatest distress will at last be overbalanced and salvation brought down. But it is well to be observed that we must also be watchful, and not act contrarily to the intent of our prayers, which might provoke the Lord to disannul his grant, or at least to delay his help. But when he tarries long it is not his intention to give us a denial, but rather make us more desirous and earnest, that he may bestow the more upon us afterwards; for this delay he will certainly well recompense, and grant us abundantly above all that we could ask or think.

Nov. 2.—*When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat.* Gen. iii. 6. *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* James i. 14, 15.

THUS one sin always begets another. By the eyes it rushes into the heart; from the heart it

proceeds into the mouth, hands, and feet; from us it is transferred to others, and thus we go on sinning and falling deeper and deeper. Therefore we must set a strict guard over our eyes and ears, be very cautious, and resist the least beginnings of sin, not making light of any; for, the least spark of worldly lust being entertained and cherished, we eat of the forbidden tree standing everywhere before us, and thereby a great fire may be kindled. But, having always our eyes fixed, in all our conversation, upon the presence of God in Christ, so as to walk continually in the light and directly to quell the least inward motions of evil, they will never break forth into gross outward sins, but we shall daily grow in grace. May the Lord enable me to practise this good lesson, and watch, himself, continually over my heart, eyes, lips, and all other senses and powers of my nature!

With my whole heart I seek thy face:
Oh, let me never stray
From thy commands, O God of grace,
Nor tread the sinner's way

Nov. 3.—*The preaching of the cross is, to us which are saved, the power of God.* 1 Cor. i. 18.

Oh that I might always live near the cross and experience its power, till I have obtained a complete victory! Whosoever was bitten by a fiery serpent, and looked upon the brazen serpent, lived. (Numb. xxi. 2.) Thus always to look upon Christ crucified is the one thing needful, from which all other blessings flow. (John iii. 14, 15.) May the eyes of my faith be fixed immovably on thee, my crucified Saviour! For, as long as I live, I shall feel the wounds inflicted by the old serpent, and therefore have need to look unto thee continually. Gracious Lord, afford me cure day by day, with entire healing at last.

"Look upward in the dying hour,
And live," the prophet cries:
But Christ performs a nobler cure
When Faith lifts up her eyes.

High on the cross the Saviour hung;
High in the heavens he reigns:
Here sinners, by the old serpent stung,
Look, and forget their pains.

When God's own Son is lifted up,
A dying world revives;

The Jew beholds the glorious hope,
The expiring Gentile lives.

Nov. 4.—*The law is not made for a righteous man.*
1 Tim. i. 9.

It is not made for his condemnation; for by the death of Christ he is made dead unto the law and liveth unto God. He has already begun to partake of eternal life in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and holiness. The law can no more condemn him than it can condemn a soul already in heaven, or even Christ himself. The law condemns on account of sin; but he is in Christ and free from sin, for he has Him who taketh away the sins of the world, and, of course, his own sins. Now, where there is no sin there is no wrath nor condemnation of the law; but instead of it there are all the blessings of grace. Christ has borne the sins of the believer, and in return extends to him the benefits of his obedience. In Christ, therefore, he has rendered satisfaction to the law, and in his conscience has peace. (Heb. ix. 9.) The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and, of course, from an evil conscience. "This

blood," says Luther, "is such a glorious robe of righteousness that God sees no sin in us when we are clothed in it. This blood makes intercession for us without ceasing before God, crying out, Grace! Grace! Pardon! Pardon! Abba, Father! It obtains forgiveness, life, and salvation."

Oh, how many tears—many drops of blood—
Did the cross and the garden see!
So many the prayers which the Son of God
Offers now at the throne for me.

Nov. 5.—*For the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day.* Ruth iii. 18.

THIS is especially true of Christ Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. O my soul, cling fast to him. He will certainly perfect his own work in thee. Yet allow not thyself to take thine ease, but follow after holiness; cleave close to Christ by faith; press on toward the mark for the prize, ever crying out, "The very God of peace sanctify me wholly." (1 Thess. v. 23, 24.) Thus shalt thou finish the work of thy day upon earth and in heaven shalt enjoy thy complete reward. Now, Lord,

do thou plant me, and water me, that I may bring forth fruit and that my fruit may remain. (John xv. 16.) Deliver me from relying upon my own works and from the evils that might flow from my own errors; but let me fill up the measure both of labour and of suffering which thou hast appointed for me, so that I may have finished my work upon the earth when my end shall come.

Two objects, Lord, of precious worth,
Before my soul arise:
One, holiness upon the earth,
One, glory in the skies.

With diligence would I employ
The talents thou dost lend:
So shall my work, to my great joy,
Be perfect in the end.

Both to myself and others too,
Far as my influence goes,
Oh, make me faithful, just, and true
Till life's short day shall close.

Nov. 6.—*Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have.* Heb. xiii. 5. *For they that will be rich fall into temptation, and*

a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

A COVETOUS man is called an idolater, and has no part in the kingdom of God; but who believes that he is covetous? The charge attaches to every one who is not content with what he has. And what says the apostle of such as will be rich? They fall. Not only they may fall, but they actually do fall; nor can the fall be avoided if men are determined that they will be rich. O reader, it is fit that thou shouldst take alarm! Get the covetous desires of thy heart subdued and kept disentangled from worldly things; for who knows how soon thou must go out of this world and leave every thing behind? Away from it with thy heart: else thy death will be very hard. The Christian's motto is, God and enough; for he that has God is content, and, consequently, always rich enough, even in poverty. He must be a covetous man indeed who has not enough, having God. O Lord, make me so free by faith from the love of earthly things that I may equally praise thee whether thou be pleased to give me something or take it away

from me, and that I may never covetously refuse that to others or to myself which thou hast given for my own and my neighbour's comfort.

Nov. 7.—*The soul of the diligent shall be made fat.* Prov. xiii. 4.

You are concerned for having no more grace. What is the reason? Perhaps you are indolent, careless, and unfaithful. And though you have no warrant even for an hour to live, yet you unreasonably suppose that you have time enough: therefore you are not serious, diligent, and fervent in prayer for sufficient strength to be always prepared and have boldness in death. No wonder, if you do not immediately resist sin, that it grows strong and you are always weak and discouraged. And how can you expect to receive more grace, if you do not faithfully improve what little you have? If you would but diligently and faithfully apply yourself to the word and prayer, God would certainly not be wanting on his part to fulfil his promises and give you enough. It is well to be observed, and we must know it once

for all, that there is no such thing as making any progress in grace and carrying our point unless we are mindful of ourselves, watching and praying against all sins and whatever may be a hinderance, on the one hand, and following with all diligence that which is good and what may be a furtherance, on the other. It is not enough to use *some*, we must use *all*, diligence; and according as our grace is increased our diligence must increase also, since it goes against the stream.

Well to resist the sinful power
Requires a strong restraint:
We must be watchful every hour,
And pray, but never faint.

Nov. 8.—*In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.* Phil. ii. 3. *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For, if a man think himself to be something, while he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work; and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.* Gal. vi. 2–4.

If we were truly humble, and looked upon ourselves as most miserable sinners, we should willingly submit to all adversities and patiently

bear the burden and infirmities of others, considering that God has borne with us a great deal more. Observing, therefore, the faults of our neighbour, we must not forget our own. Perhaps in other things we are weaker than he. This will restrain us from judging rashly, or speaking unadvisedly to others; but first we should speak to God about it, and then try with gentle means to improve those whom we may think worthy of blame. Nay, the best method is to consider our neighbour on the good and ourselves on the bad side, and to see whether we can apologize for him and have not reason severely to condemn ourselves. If his fault admits of no excuse, still, we must not suffer him to stir up our corruption, but plead affectionately for him before the throne of our forgiving God. It is very easy to find fault with others; but to show love, and restore them by prayer and brotherly correction, is quite another thing.

Love lays her own advantage by
To seek her neighbour's good:
So God's own Son came down to die
And bought our lives with blood.

Nov. 9.—*Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.* Ps. cxlv. 16.

WHO considers these words with sufficient care and practically draws from them the right conclusions? The hand of God being my chief provision and storehouse, is it not a shame to be anxiously careful for any thing? Has the Lord all things in his hand? Then surely I shall receive what he has for me: none will be able to withhold it. Faith has always a free access to the treasures of God, who is never wanting. Christians, says Luther, have their treasures in such a high place, even in God, that no thief can rob them; and they are sure to have enough in God. Though the Lord should try them with want a little while, yet he relieves them in due season: their bread shall fall from heaven rather than they shall be left without it. You need not, says Christ, seek these other things: they shall be brought to you, if ye only abide in me. If this does not comfort and strengthen us, nothing else will. Many rely on their ample worldly stores; but, if they had true faith, this would be their confidence and joy, that God has engaged to supply all their need. If the Lord is pleased

to bestow on his servants any particular expression of his providential bounty, they are thankful, and make a proper use of it; but if he withholds what they ask for, they learn cheerfully to submit.

Nov. 10.—*But every man hath his proper gift of God.* 1 Cor. vii. 7.

God sometimes bestows a high sense of spiritual joy, or the power to do much good upon the earth. Yet we cannot force him to grant these gifts to us. They are the gifts of his grace, and he bestows them when and upon whomsoever he will. Only be faithful in the use of what you have and of what is intrusted to your hands. Fly from sin; for sin is sure to prevent all spiritual joy. Stand fast in prayer and in the word of God; for this is your appointed duty, and it is this that God requires at your hands. If you perform your part, God will perform his. He will refresh you with the joys of his salvation: he will give you every thing that you truly need and in the use of which you will be faithful. O Lord, let me never wander beyond the bounds thou hast ap

pointed for me; let me never presume to stretch forth my hand after any thing that is not according to thy gracious will, lest in so doing I might fail to improve the talent thou hast already given. Let me ever be mindful of my proper gift and duty; and, when I move even in the midst of holy things, deliver me from self-sufficiency, that I may not run beyond thy will, but always wait for thy command and stand ready to move only according to thy pleasure. O Lord, employ me wholly as an instrument in thy hands, and let both my body and soul be offered up to thy service forever. Amen.

Nov. 11.—*He will beautify the meek with salvation.* Ps. cxlix. 4. *If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye.* 1 Peter iii. 4. Ps. x. 17, xxii. 26, xxxvii. 11, xlviii. 10; Isa. liv. 11.

ALL this is for the humble and poor in spirit. But how can we be both poor and blessed? The answer is obvious. We are poor in ourselves, but become blessed in Christ. If we derive no happiness from him, it is because we are not truly sensible of our own insuffi-

ciency and wretchedness. When we are brought low, let us confidently lay hold on Christ, and we shall be blessed; for all is ours. We may say, O Lord, if thou art a glorious Help to the needy, lo, here are want and misery enough: therefore I come, with all my want and poverty, to the riches of thy grace; with all my darkness, to thy light; with the body of this death, to thee, the Fountain of life. Grant that all evils may be swallowed up in the fulness of thy love. Mine innumerable wants I set before thee, as so many empty vessels, and desire to have them filled with thy spiritual and heavenly blessings.

Oh, might I hear thy heavenly tongue
But whisper, "Thou art mine,"
Those gentle words should raise my song
To notes almost Divine.

How would my leaping heart rejoice
And think my heaven secure!
I trust the all-creating Voice:
And faith desires no more.

Nov. 12.—*Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.* Eph. iv. 23.

O LORD, grant me daily repentance, a tender feeling of my sins, and a remembrance of my baptismal covenant, that by the power of thy death the old man may be crucified, and by the power of thy resurrection the new man may rise up and grow in grace, being filled and refreshed with the fruits of thy Spirit. Let me ever be earnest and look upon every day as the very first and the very last,—that with each I may, as it were, begin anew to work out my salvation with fear and trembling and so be always prepared for death and eternity. Give me grace to surmount all difficulties and to avoid every thing that may prove a torment to my conscience in the hour of death. And, as there is no standing still, I humbly beseech thee to stir me up daily and hourly more and more, that I may make all haste, and "give all diligence to make my calling and election sure."

Lord, I am vile, conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean,
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts the race and taints us all.

Soon as we draw our infant breath,
The seeds of sin grow up for death:
The law demands a perfect heart:
But we're defiled in every part.

Great God, create my heart anew,
And form my spirit pure and true:
Oh, make me wise betimes to spy
My danger and my remedy.

Nov. 13.—*He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor: his righteousness endureth forever.* Ps. cxii. 4. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand.* Eccles. xi. 6.

THOSE that lay up treasures on earth put out all that they can spare to interest; and those that desire to reap soon and plentifully are careful to sow accordingly. Let us imitate them in our charitable distributions. Luther says, "We must not pretend to pay the debt of charity with some poor mites and pence. If you will give something, give bountifully: take your hands full, as if you were sowing, like the poor widow with her two mites, which she sowed freely, though it was her whole substance. But the rich ones were not so liberal, but covetously offered only what they could spare very well

Is it not said we should sow? Now, seeds men sow with hands full; and so should we; for God loveth a cheerful giver, and will in his turn dispense again bountifully to you, that ye should have sufficiency in all things to every good work; but, God dispensing so bountifully to you, why should you, then, grudge him any thing or make only such poor returns? For what we do to our neighbour is the same as if it were done to God himself, if done in faith and love."

Awake, my zeal, awake, my love,
And serve my Saviour here below
In works which all the saints above
And holy angels cannot do.

Nov. 14.—*He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.* Ps. cxxx. 8. *O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.* Jer. xiv. 8. *In wrath remember mercy.* Habak. iii. 2.

DESPAIR not, O my soul, in any tribulation or conflict, as if it were impossible to overcome. The healing word of God contains advice and comfort for all cases. The Lord, being thy Helper in all adversities and able to turn the

sharpest afflictions into the greatest blessings, would never smite if he were not willing to heal, nor withhold from thee one privilege if he had not a better to substitute. O Lord, I trust thou wilt carry me through all difficulties. Though my misery and weakness were ever so great, yet there is nothing too great for thee: it is all one to thee to help in great and small distresses: nay, the more I am surrounded with grief and weakness, the more wilt thou pity, spare, and nourish me, as a tender mother does the least of all her children, and the more occasion there will be to display thy mighty salvation. The sharper and longer my distress and conflicts have been, the nearer, greater, and sweeter, I trust, will also be my victory and salvation; for the same Lord who has assured me that I shall not be tried above measure has also engaged to lead me on, conquering, till at length all mine enemies are subdued.

There's full redemption at his throne
For sinners long enslaved:
The great Redeemer is his Son,
And Israel shall be saved.

Nov. 15.—*There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.* Joshua vii. 13. See also 2 Peter i. 4. *Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

KNOWN sin, in all its various forms, is an accursed thing, by which we are deprived of the protection of God and cannot stand before our enemies. Behold, therefore, the severity of God, (Josh. vii. 21–26,) and be more earnest. Make all haste to flee from the lust of the world, especially from the lust of the eye, which is the love of money. Break off even the most subtle and specious bands of unrighteousness. Unless the splinters of the unjust Mammon be taken out, the wound cannot be healed up. Nay, examine thyself closely in other things; and, whatever sinful lust is found in thy breast, put it off and flee from it: else thou must not wonder at thy being so weak in spirit. He that does not resist the sinful motions of his heart will very easily give a loose to his hands and tongue. But he that immediately subdues the inward corruptions will certainly be preserved from their breaking out in sinful actions. O Lord, deliver me from all accursed

things, and keep my heart always under thy closest inspection and discipline. Amen.

Why should my passions mix with earth
And thus debase my heavenly birth?
Why should I cleave to things below
And let my God, my Saviour, go?

Nov. 16.—*Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded.* Luke xiv. 22. *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* John xvii. 4. *For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.* Heb. x. 14.

Do promptly whatever good work you can do to-day. It is not certain whether you will see to-morrow; and, should it come, it will be sure to bring its own peculiar labours along with it. Especially, do not delay for a single hour to make sure of your salvation through Christ. O my Father, stablish, strengthen, and settle me, that I may ever see with increasing clearness, and especially in death, that I am already perfected by the one offering of Jesus Christ my Lord.

Whilst in the body, I would daily die;
My thoughts would every hour to heaven ascend:

Be diligence my rule as seasons fly,
That all my work be finish'd in the end!

"'Tis finish'd," said the bleeding, dying One:
So let me my appointed work complete
And say, with him, "'Tis finish'd;" all is done:
So shall my joy be great, my rest be sweet.

And, since through weakness I must ofttimes fail,
To thy great work alone, O Lord, I flee:
For all my wants thy work shall still avail,
Shall make me clean, my righteousness shall be.

Within myself I find but want and woe;
Yet in the Lord I find a rich supply:
Confiding in his work, I onward go,
My own work to complete, then calmly die.

Nov. 17.—*And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power.* Exod. ix. 16.

LUTHER speaks as follows:—"A Christian has to endure many tribulations; but he does not feel the anxiety of despair. He is as calm and secure as if he had the whole world, with all its possessions. For, if he loses every thing, he reflects within himself, 'My God, who cannot be taken away from me, can at any time raise up and bestow upon me more than is to

be found upon the whole earth.' Riches and poverty, praise and censure, affect him one no more than the other; for he discerns the hand of God in all. Know thou, therefore, in thy greatest straits, that it is only in accordance with the will of God when death and the devil come out upon thee in such terrors and alarms. It is as though God had said, I have the devil and all thy foes in my power: all their violence and malignity is entirely under my control. It is I who have so ordered these things for thee. Thou art indeed a poor worm, but thou art mine and hast my word. If I give the devil permission to set upon thee, then he roars and rages furiously, as if he would swallow thee at once; and thou art fearful and of little faith. But, if thou wilt cast thyself right boldly at once upon thy faith, thou shalt find that God is stronger than death, the devil, sin, hell, and all thine enemies; and so the devil shall not hurt a hair of thy head." Thou art a child of God, his covenant-child, and what shall injure thee? Who shall hurt the apple of his eye?

Our might is naught but weakness: soon
Should we the battle lose;

But for us fights the rightful Man
Whom God himself doth choose.
Askest thou his name?
'Tis Jesus Christ,—the same
Whom Lord of Hosts we call,
God only, over all:
None from the field can drive him.

Nov. 18.—*Follow me.* Luke v. 27. *And endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.* 2 Tim. ii. 3.

He who in all things curbs his own will, and spurs himself on to prayer, love, meekness, and every thing that is good, displays more earnestness and sincerity than does the man who affects to take all these things easy. At last, however, God rewards such sincerity with the gift of a willing heart, though at first he may suffer us to be painfully sensible of the stubbornness of our own hearts, so that we may be the more importunate in prayer. If we only hold on in prayer and in this conflict, the longer God's help is delayed so much the greater shall it be when it does come. But if we pray only, and neglect to subdue our self-will in every thing else, we can make no progress; for, on account of the resistance of the flesh. we must fight

against it on all sides and at every step. But above all things is it necessary that we should ever be stirring up and stimulating our faith. O Lord, let me ever wait upon thee. Thou art faithful: thou dost call, warn, and arouse me often: oh, let me be faithful too, and always follow thee at once, even though my heart at first may be slow to yield. Oh, let me never so give up to unbelief, to faithlessness, to selfishness, to presumption, that I shall have to suffer on account of them, that I should ever serve sin in the body or come short of the salvation of my soul.

Selfish will and indolence
I'll resist, by help Divine,
And in every grace advance
Till my will is wholly thine:
Yet lay not aught too hard on me,
That I may never faithless be

Nov. 19.—*The Lord is not far from every one of us; for in him we live and move and have our being.* Acts xvii. 27, 28. *Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.* Luke xii. 7.

How close and tender the love which the Lord bears to his people! Nothing is so mean

as to be overlooked by the providence of God; and scarcely any thing is so minute as not to be capable of either injuring or profiting the soul. How sweet is it to observe the Divine footsteps even in the least considerable affairs, and to be satisfied that we may trust every concern in the Divine hands! O Lord, grant that I may never swerve from thee nor do any thing without thee, but that, in going in and out, I may always have respect to thy presence, as if I had to do with none but thee. Oh that I could transact all my affairs as if with thee alone and in all places look upon thee as my Observer and Friend! Let me carefully mark the inward workings of thy grace and the outward tokens of thy providence, so as daily to have a true sense of thy gracious presence in every thing, whether more or less important, and thereby to be strengthened in faith and kept in a composed state of mind,—considering that nothing happens by mere chance, but that all is wisely ordered by thy providential care for our good; firmly believing, if any thing goes contrary to expectation, that some benefit will accrue from it, if I be but patient and resigned.

Nov. 20.—*Cleave to that which is good.* Rom. xii. 9 *Seek those things which are above.* Col. iii. 1.

THE tendencies of those subjects which we habitually contemplate, and the manners of those persons with whom we are familiar, display themselves in our prevailing sentiments and behaviour. If we converse much with God and heavenly things, we shall be heavenly-minded; but if we deal much with the world and temporal things, we must be sensual and worldly-minded. Up, therefore, with thy heart to God; lift it hourly up to him: though it sinks down often to the earth again, yet the Lord has patience and will as often receive it again. Therefore raise it up continually and take great care to keep it above, that it may not sink down and be defiled with worldly things again. Thus it will be easy to abide in a spiritual frame; but without this care we cannot abide in it at all: a feather easily rises higher and higher when kept above ground, but moves slowly upward when once fallen into the mire. By this comparison you may see how you can always find the Saviour's yoke easy, and how it may become very galling to you. Now, which will you choose to do? Oh

that I may always choose the best,—namely, to cleave unto the Lord, seeking the things which are above, and never plunge into the world, to defile and distress my soul!

Descend from heaven, immortal Dove;
  Stoop down, and take me on thy wings,
And mount and bear me far above
  The reach of these inferior things,—

Beyond, beyond this lower sky,
  Up where eternal ages roll,
Where solid pleasures never die
  And fruits immortal feast the soul.

Nov. 21.—*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.* Luke ii. 29, 30. *Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong.* Isa. xxxv. 4.

It is only wilful unbelief that seals the condemnation of the soul: no such melancholy result attaches to the weak faith of a fearful and tempted Christian. If I do not reject the ransom of Christ my Surety, but feel my utter need of it and am heartily desirous to accept it by faith, God will no more reject me than he will reject my Surety or his own eternal decree. Yet, since I have very weak faith and am often

ready to sink into despair, how can I depart this life in peace? With God this is possible; for he can impart the peace that passeth all understanding, (Phil. iv. 7,) and which is therefore able to sustain the weakest and to embolden the most fearful. It is not by any power of our own, but solely by thy Divine power, that we shall be kept through faith unto salvation. With God it is equally easy to carry the weakest or the strongest through the scenes of life and the gates of death into the eternal world. Since, then, God is the same wise, gracious, and mighty God in all circumstances, he will lend me his aid in every extremity and bring me safe to the heavenly shore.

Death cannot make our souls afraid:
If God be with us there,
We may walk through its darkest shade
And never yield to fear.

I could renounce my all below,
If my Creator bid,
And run, if I were call'd to go,
And die as Moses did.

Nov. 22.—*O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.* Ps. civ. 24. *Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.* Ps. cvii. 43.

O LORD, how many are thine unknown mercies! I am surrounded with them on all sides; yet how little do I observe them and acknowledge them to thy praise! If thou hast punished even the heathen for not having glorified thee in thy works, what will become of me? Pardon, O Lord, this my blindness and ingratitude, and to all thine other kindnesses add a thankful heart, that I may joyfully praise thee for the blessing of my creation, the daily bounty of thy providence, and, above all, for the adorable gift of thy Son. In all thy creatures may I see and adore thine infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, and be thereby continually strengthened in faith and stirred up to thy praise and love! Thus let me always converse with thee, cleave to thee, and have uninterrupted communion with thee, that nothing may in the least disturb this disposition of my soul. O Lord, grant me this privilege for thy glory's sake. Amen.

The glories of my Maker God
My joyful voice shall sing,
And call the nations to adore
Their Former and their King.

We bring our mortal powers to God,
And worship with our tongues;
We claim some kindred with the skies,
And join the angelic songs.

Nov. 23.—*The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.* Judges vii. 20. *They are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.* Numb. xiv. 9. *But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and has followed me fully, him will I bring unto the land whereunto he went.* Numb. xiv. 24. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee.* Ps. lxxvi. 10.

TAKE care, O my soul, that there may also be *another spirit* with thee, as there was with Joshua and Caleb,—not to be discouraged on account of thy weakness and the great number of thine enemies, as if it were impossible to live holily and get the victory. Christ—a Leader infinitely superior to Joshua or Caleb—marches out before thee, to make war himself against thine enemies; and who can conquer him? He is unchangeable: his Spirit is as

mighty now as ever, and his word as powerful. His strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness; and, with the sharp two-edged sword which he will teach thee to wield, thou shalt destroy or put to flight all thine adversaries. Afflictions and temptations may harass thee from day to day; but he will supply thee with all kinds of Divine help, and, as a defence against every individual foe, he will furnish thee with a special sword out of the armory of his word. So, then, stand fast in the word, and thou shalt overcome. Should the enemy seem to have his strongholds, like towering, frowning walls, either within thee or about thee, nevertheless his fall is sure. "A word shall make him quail; for he is judged of Heaven."

Exalted near their Saviour's seat,
His saints shall dwell, their dangers o'er,
And cast their crowns beneath his feet,
And love, and wonder, and adore.

Nov. 24.—*And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* Matt. xxviii. 20. *I will be with him in trouble,* &c. Ps. xci. 15. *Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.* Jer. i. 17.

O MY soul, spread out all thy complaint before the Lord as though he were visibly near thee; for he is truly with thee, even in thy times of greatest need, wise in counsel and mighty to save. Faith indeed does not actually see, but it lays such hold of God as though it did see Him who is invisible. Thus by its trials and the help it obtains it waxes stronger and stronger. Of what, then, shall I be afraid? But in thy severest trials only do not think that God will confound thee nor that thy faith shall be shipwrecked No; for it is by such means also that God seeks to make you firmer in his word and stronger in your faith. In your times of trial, your conscience may be more painfully sensible of sin: this will bring you down very low; but it will also make you the more ready to fly to Him who saves from sin, and so your faith will be confirmed and strengthened more than it was before. Luther says, "Even the sins he has committed may be of service to the believer; for if he had no

sin to lament he could not make much progress in the grace of God. If I were not sensible of my sins and of a reproving conscience, I could never so well appreciate the value or enjoy the sweetness of God's word." Neither could we be so fervent in prayer; for when the fire is removed from the crucible the metal will harden and cease to flow.

> In all life's woes thy word my trust shall be,
> And when I die, the same shall comfort me.

Nov. 25.—*I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* John xvii. 23. *Christ liveth in me.* Gal. ii. 20.

Luther says, "Here we see that Christ and my conscience must become one body, so that nothing remain in my sight but Christ crucified and raised from the dead. And, since Christ liveth in me, I have in him peace, righteousness, and everlasting life; whilst on the other hand the terrors of the law, sin, and death must depart. With Christ I am so united that out of him and me there is made in spirit, as it were, one body; and this union is inseparable. By faith I always find myself in Christ; and,

by a peculiar phrase of the apostle, which is not after the manner of men, I can even say, with the highest joy, I am one with Christ,—not personally, not in person, but the righteousness of Christ, his victory, his life, all that he is and has, is mine, and Christ can say, I am one with this poor sinner; that is, his sin and death have become mine." Oh, blessed exchange! Out of Christ there is not a moment's peace: but am I in Christ? have I become one with him? what then can injure me? O Lord, let me, as in my true element, live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Then not even death nor hell can swallow me up. No, never!

Both at death and at hell I can hurl my defiance,
For Christ shall subdue them by power Divine:
The Lord and my soul stand in blissful alliance,
And whatever belongeth to him, all is mine.

What though foes should my ruin be ever intending?
In a combat with Christ they must first try their steel:
If they fail in the fight whilst with Jesus contending,
In their conflict with me naught but shame shall they feel.

Nov. 26.—*I will heal your backslidings.* Jer. iii. 22. *It is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* Phil. ii. 13.

BLESSED Lord and Saviour, I would fain believe in thee, be faithful, obedient, and work always that which is good. And, since this also is thy will, I trust it shall be done; for, if thou wilt and I will, who can hinder it? True it is that sin, flesh, the world, and devils oppose; but shall these enemies be stronger than thou, the mighty God? Shall their opposition be able to quell thy work in me, if I do not consent to it? That can never be. The more violence they use upon me, the more earnest may I be with thee in prayer; and the more I pray, the more glorious will thine assistance be: the more they hinder, the more thou wilt further; so that all their hinderances shall be swallowed up by thy furtherances, as the serpents of the sorcerers in Egypt were swallowed up by the serpent of Moses. The enemy will fall by his own sword, and the greatest opposition will turn to my good and to the promoting of thy work. Every thing indeed can overcome me if I do not abide in thee by continual faith and prayer; but, by

thus abiding in thee, all opposition proves not only weak in itself, but profitable to my soul.

God liveth ever!
Wherefore, soul, despair thou never:
Our God is good: in every place
  His love is known, his help is found;
His mighty arm and tender grace
  Bring good from ills that hem us round.
Easier than we think can he
Turn to joy our agony.
Soul, remember, 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all forever reigns.

Nov. 27.—*I am like a green fir-tree: from me is thy fruit found.* Hos. xiv. 8. *I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground.* Mal. iii. 11. See also Isa. xxvii. 2, 6.

Is it not a disagreeable thing for a gardener to see the finest blossoms and fruits destroyed by the caterpillars? Does it not rejoice him to see all the branches bow with ripe fruit? O thou heavenly Husbandman, grant that I may not displease thee. Let me abide in Christ, my true Vine, and always bring forth good fruits. But, since every fruit has its enemies, and thou hast no sooner produced

what is good than the insects of sin endeavour to destroy it, I beseech thee to make me watchful and diligent. Rebuke the devourer, and preserve me as a branch of Christ, night and day, as thou hast promised, that my fruits may endure to eternity. The fruitfulness of the gardens and vineyards which thy right hand has planted glorifies thy name. Oh that I may contribute largely to that noblest end of all human, all angelic, actions! Let the crystal stream which proceeds from thy throne fertilize the soil in which thou permittest me to grow.

Like trees of myrrh and spice we stand,
Planted by God the Father's hand;
And all his springs in Zion flow,
To make the young plantation grow.

Let my Belovéd come and taste
His pleasant fruits at his own feast:
"I come, my spouse, I come," he cries,
With love and pleasure in his eyes.

Nov. 28.—*He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him.* Psalm cxlv. 19.

THE Lord is both able and willing to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask

or think," granting not only according to the notion of our narrow hearts, but according to the riches of his glory, as becomes his majesty. Christ delights in great petitions; for he is a great Lord and is rich unto all that call upon him. He has all the riches of his merits and gifts, not for himself, (since, being the very God, he wanted nothing for himself,) but only for us, even the rebellious, who sincerely call upon him. Therefore what he has, as Mediator, all belongs to me, if I am but an humble and earnest petitioner. O my soul, pray to him, nay, be much in prayer; and, as often as thou pourest out thy soul before him in prayer, let these words recur and fill thee with joyful expectation:—"He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him." Not a petition, not a groan, shall be lost. How many blessings, in addition to those which we have, should we all receive if we were but more frequent and earnest in our applications! Why are we so reluctant to glorify God and to seek higher measures of felicity?

He knows the pains his servants feel;
He hears his children cry,
And, their best wishes to fulfil,
His grace is ever nigh.

His mercy never shall remove
From men of heart sincere:
He saves the souls whose humble love
Is join'd with holy fear.

Nov. 29.—*Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.* Josh. viii. 26. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* 1 John iii. 8.

A WILLING subjection to any one sin is not consistent with the grace of God and true saving faith. (Rom. vi. 14.) Therefore banish all wicked inhabitants out of thy heart, and let no one sin have dominion over thee; since we may be as easily ruined by the dominion of a single sin—that is, by a willing subjection to it—as by the dominion of a thousand. Though thou art actually converted and hast gained the dominion over thy sins, yet thou must not draw back thy hand and lay the spear and sword of the Spirit aside. There is no truce in this war, nor any rest found but in fighting; for if thou dost not vanquish thine enemies they will vanquish thee. Therefore the Christian soldier's watchword is *Fight on*, looking

to Jesus. Satan left Christ only for a time: much more will he renew his assaults upon us again and again: nay, if a man is not watchful, but presumptuous, "he takes to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself." But, if the conflict last long with thee, remember that it is also the case with others: fight on, therefore, and faint not; at last the victory will be the more sweet and glorious. Only, above all things, take the shield of faith; for faith alone triumphs, by which we are in covenant with Christ, and he makes one cause with us.

Nov. 30.—*Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.* Isa. lv. 1. *Come; for all things are now ready.* Luke xiv. 17. *Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.* John vi. 37.

COULD the heart of a mother ever cast off an afflicted child when it cries for help? Come, then, O soul! come as well as thou canst: 'tis better to come poor and wretched, slowly and even creeping, than not to come at all. Do not imagine that such constrained, shy approaches are displeasing to the Saviour. No: he does not say, Whosoever cometh to me full

of joyful, pleasant feelings; but, whosoever cometh at all, in any way, him will I not cast out. You should therefore not think of bringing any of your own righteousness, but only your own misery, with you, and so imploring only mercy. God does not require the feeling of joy within you: that is his own peculiar gift, and he can very easily grant it to you; but he requires earnestness, sincerity, and perseverance. As Bunyan, in speaking of the experience of a broken heart, has said, "you are like a horseman who wishes to ride in full gallop, when his horse is hardly able to trot. His disposition is not to be judged of by the slow movements of his horse, but by the vigour with which he applies the whip and the spurs." Thou wilt come to Christ? Thy flesh is sluggish and stubborn; but be in earnest and sincere: come, and he will not cast thee out.

O Lord, I come, and thou, dear Lamb,
Shalt take me to thee as I am.

DECEMBER.

DECEMBER 1.—*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* Rom. xii. 21. *Who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?* 1 Peter iii. 12.

IT is twice said, "all are yours," (1 Cor. iii. 21, 22;) and whatever is mine must be of use in serving and helping me. Of course, then, all things, even the assaults of the devil himself, must tend to your advantage, must make your victories more illustrious. You should therefore expect to wax very strong, seeing there are so many to lend you assistance. As to whatever might harm you, you must only be sure to lay hold of it in the right place, and so you will always find a sword in your hand that shall be mighty to protect you. For example, should any thing go against you, do not cast your burden upon men, but upon the Lord, as though your whole concern were with him; receive it at his hands, as a trial of your pa-

tience and meekness, and you will very soon find comfort. Does any painful sense of outward or inward corruption distress you? be only the more upon your guard, and think, "There are enemies around me: I must watch and pray." Mistrust yourself more, but cleave closer to Jesus by faith and prayer, as a little child to its mother when it sees an enemy coming. So the evil shall be overruled for good.

Though the sheep of thy pasture much evil surrounds,
Yet thy grace, blessed Jesus, more freely abounds.
Oh, protect me alike in the heat and the blast,
That through all I may reach thy bright presence at last.

DEC. 2.—*Prayer shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised.* Ps. lxxii. 15.

OH, what a condescending King we have, who may always be approached! You say, "Oh that my coldness and indifference would permit me to do it!" But are you not sensible of your wants and miseries? Is not this backwardness of which you complain, misery enough? Therefore you ought always to pray, and to pray most when you feel yourself sinking into a

worldly and torpid frame. Arise, therefore, and pray: the good Spirit of God will assist you in it. Encouraged by the promises of a prayer-hearing God and the special assistance of the Holy Spirit in this work, we must, even in the greatest conflicts, not omit to resist the temptations of the devil. Though we have sinned, we must not refrain from prayer; for what can we do better? What can we do besides? If we stop till we make ourselves worthy, we shall never approach God. A believer prays without ceasing; for as long as he is sensible of the evil of sin, so long does he call for mercy. Lord, grant me more of the spirit of prayer, and let it never be extinguished in my heart.

Arise, my soul, my joyful powers,
And triumph in thy God;
Awake, my voice, and loud proclaim
His glorious grace abroad.

Arise, my soul, from deep distress,
And banish every fear:
God calls thee to his throne of grace,
To spread thy sorrows there.

DEC. 3.—*Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.* 1 Cor. iv. 2. *And ye are not your own.* 1 Cor. vi. 19.

O LORD, I would be faithful in the employment of every talent thou art pleased to grant. Whatever thou shalt bestow upon me, add also the grace of faithfulness; prepare my heart as a vessel fit for the Master's use, that I may not despise the grace granted unto me, but cherish it in meekness and godly sincerity and so employ it that I may grow still stronger therein. Help me also to be faithful in my calling; let my conscience and my heart always feel the claims of duty, that I may come short in nothing, but promptly discharge all as the duty of every day may require. Deliver me also from the control of a rash and hasty spirit, use me as an instrument in thy hand, and work in me both to will and to do of thy good pleasure. Whatever thou mayst accomplish through me, may I ever give all the glory of it to thee, ascribing to myself nothing but weakness and infirmity, that I may not usurp thy praise! for I am only a sinner. Lord, grant me faithfulness in all things, especially in cultivating a meek and lowly spirit. The worm of pride often consumes the fairest flowers.

DEC. 4.—*Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.* Ps. xxv. 15. *Happy is the man that feareth alway.* Prov. xxviii. 14.

OUR spiritual enemies are powerful and crafty: they lie in wait everywhere, so that in all places and at all times we are surrounded with many cruel murderers. Blessed is he that keeps clear from self-confidence, and, fearing always, says within himself, as soon as he awakes in the morning, "Who knows what temptations I may meet with to-day? Perhaps, when I arise, at the very first step my feet may be entangled in dangerous snares and nets." Grant, O Lord, I beseech thee, that, distrusting myself, I may put my whole confidence in thee, watching evermore in all things, and looking cautiously in all places about me where there is any fear of danger. Whatever I am about to do or to speak, let me first commune with thee by prayer, that, keeping always close to thee, I may be preserved against the power and craft of mine enemies, as in a stronghold, and confidently say, according to thy own pattern given, (Ps. xvi. 8,) "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

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God is my portion and my joy:
His counsels are my light:
He gives me sweet advice by day
And guards me through the night.

My soul would all her thoughts approve
To his all-seeing eye:
Nor death nor hell my hopes shall move
While such a Friend is nigh.

DEC. 5.—*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* John v. 17.

O MY soul, rely on the Divine power, which is ever active and cannot fail to destroy thy sins and fulfil the good pleasure of God in thee, He is our All: we are nothing, and can do nothing. Happy are we that we can have him for our Support in all things, and that the children of God are not required to direct their own steps, but shall be led by their heavenly Father. Now, O Lord, since by the will and workings of my own heart I throw only so many hinderances and blocks in my way, grant, I beseech thee, that, in true dependence on thee, I may venture every thing, and, despairing of my own sufficiency, may always abide in thee, draw all necessary strength from thee

by prayer, and bring forth many good fruits which may last to eternity. Thy work in true believers, weak as it may seem now, will last forever, and none shall be able to destroy it.

God, my Supporter and my Hope,
My Help forever near,
Thine arm of mercy held me up
When sinking in despair.

Thy counsels, Lord, shall guide my feet
Through this dark wilderness,
Thy hand conduct me near thy seat,
To dwell before thy face.

Then, if the springs of life were broke,
And flesh and heart should faint,
God is my soul's eternal Rock,
The Strength of every saint.

DEC. 6.—*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* James iv. 7, 8. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* James v. 16.

O MY soul, draw nigh to God in prayer, and he will draw nigh to thee; be instant in it, and the devil cannot stand against thee; for prayer will drive away sin and Satan, as the

wind drives the smoke before it: it works wonderfully great things, and will make easy what seems impossible. If God has given thee some spiritual blessings already, this is an encouragement to hope also for that which thou lackest yet: therefore only pray confidently, and thou shalt receive evermore. Nothing but unbelief can exclude us from the enjoyment of many blessings in this world and all blessings in the world to come.

My God, I bow before thy feet:
When shall my soul get near thy seat?
When shall I see thy glorious face
And all thy majesty and grace?

How should I love thee and adore,
With hopes and joys unknown before,
And bid this trifling world begone,
Nor tempt my heart so near thy throne!

My soul should pour out all her cares
In flowing words, or flowing tears:
Thy smiles should ease my sharpest pain,
Nor should I seek my God in vain

DEC. 7.—*There is none good but one; that is, God.* Matt. xix. 17. *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* Gen. vi. 5.

A CHRISTIAN often feels and deeply laments the waywardness of his own heart: he often seems to himself to be the weakest of creatures. A hypocrite knows little or nothing of his own sins, and esteems himself to be better than others. Therefore learn that in thee—that is, in thy flesh—there is no good thing: otherwise thy repentance cannot be sincere. But hast thou attained to the knowledge of thyself and turned from thy evil ways? still, do not be so presumptuous as to think that all difficulties have been surmounted. After the lapse of years thou mayst yet discover that there are abominations in thee the existence of which thou hast never suspected. It becomes thee, therefore, to be always very faithful in watching thine own heart. As a poor, penitent sinner, wishing ever to become more meek and lowly, depend upon the grace of God alone: otherwise the Pharisee will soon rise up within thee. Whoever regards himself as wholly a sinner, without merit, and then seeks all in

Christ, he has part in the complete righteousness of Christ and can regard himself through Christ as justified before God. O Lord, deepen in me the godly sorrow of repentance. I can do nothing; but my consolation is that thou alone art good and that thou canst and wilt work whatever is good, in me.

Then what I want and thou canst give
I shall through thy free grace receive.

Dec. 8.—*Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.* Exod. ii. 9.

As Moses was ordered to be saved by the daughter of his most cruel enemy, so Satan himself, even when he meditates our destruction, may be of service to us. Blessed Saviour, thou wilt not leave me in the hands of any that can hurt me! If thou art mine, all is mine,—even thy Father, thy Spirit, and thy heavenly glory: all accidents, all enemies, must work for my good and be instruments and ministers of my salvation. May I, trusting in thee, never yield to fear, but find that every thing which occurs to me is made a

blessing,—that winds and waves are but accelerating my progress towards the shore of a happy eternity!

My soul, survey thy happiness
If thou art found a child of grace.
How richly is the gospel stored!
What joy the promises afford!

All things are now the gift of God
And purchased with our Saviour's blood,
While the good Spirit shows us how
To use and to enjoy them too.

If peace and plenty crown my days,
They help me, Lord, to speak thy praise;
If bread of sorrows be my food,
Those sorrows work my real good.

DEC. 9.—*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns.* Eph. v. 19. *Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns.* Col. iii. 16.

IF we are obliged to promote the temporal good of our neighbour, how much more the spiritual by edifying discourses! But how often have we occasion to remark that the children of God seem at a loss for conversation or slide into unprofitable subjects! It would be well for them if at such seasons they were thus to

appeal on high:—"O my God, here I receive a guest, and, having nothing to set before him, I pray thee to give what will prove wholesome food both for him and myself." They would often be indulged with a gracious answer, and thus at once receive and convey spiritual improvement. Some, affecting to be philosophers, mock at Divine things, and even at prayer, as if we needed no other help than our own depraved reason and will. But what St. Paul says (Rom. i. 22) is fulfilled in them:—"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." What will become of these poor scoffers upon their dying bed and at the day of judgment? Oh that they would take warning while it is time!

Lord, I will bless thee all my days;
Thy praise shall dwell upon my tongue;
My soul shall glory in thy grace,
While saints rejoice to hear the song.

DEC. 10.—*Tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him.* Mark xvi. 7. *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the*

sins of the whole world. 1 John ii. 1, 2. *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.* Heb. xii. 12.

HAST thou been slack, unfaithful, and fallen away? Thou art not to make light of it: lamentations become thee; and thou oughtest to humble thyself deeply before God. But why wilt thou continue in thy fallen condition any longer? From the depths of thy humiliation and sorrow, call upon the Redeemer: he is ready to forgive thee, as he forgave Peter,—"having received gifts for the rebellious." Delay not to lay hold of thy ransom, which is greater than all the sins in the world. This ransom also is for thy sin: it has obtained thy pardon, and this pardon has been offered thee even in thy baptism. Be not discouraged, nor listen to those suggestions which would urge thee either to cherish despondency or to seek relief in the pleasures of the world. The Lord even now reaches forth his hands to thee anew by this very word: come, lift thyself up at it, and be careful for the time to come to be so much more cautious and humble, and especially to treat others with greater tenderness and affection; "for the feet of a Christian travel

well," says Luther, "when he walks humbly with God."

We give thee, Lord, our highest praise,
The tribute of our tongues;
But themes so infinite as these
Exceed our noblest songs.

DEC. 11.—*Behold, we come unto thee.* Jer. iii. 22. *I will come unto you.* John xiv. 18. *When Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.* Luke xix. 5.

LORD JESUS, I come to thee and thou drawest near to me: who, then, or what, can prevent our interview? neither Satan nor sin: for these walls of separation have all been taken away. "Thou, Lord, sayest, Come unto me: I am not an angry Judge, but a kind Mediator between thy conscience and the Father: hold fast to me, and fear not the approach of wrath. Why? Behold, I live as thine Advocate with the Father, so that no wrath nor condemnation may ever come upon thee. For before the curse can reach thee it must of necessity first overwhelm me myself. But this is impossible; for Christ is the Beloved Son,

to whom all the fulness of grace belongs, and when the Father looks upon him and upon us in him, then all wrath vanishes away, and there is nothing for us, either in heaven or upon earth, but mercy and loving favour." So spake Luther. When our danger and our conflicts are very great and violent, then especially the Lord is ready to hasten to our help. At other times he may seem to come but slowly, and so our growth in grace may be very gradual. 'Tis thus that we learn to practise patience and faith: we exercise patience towards others, we make haste and yet learn to wait.

My Advocate, my trust is in thy grace:
Through thee alone I seek the Father's face.

DEC. 12.—*For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people.* Exod. v. 23.

EVEN at the very time in which God is about to deliver us from our sins, he causes us to be specially sensible of our sinful degradation and vileness, and it seems to us as if we were more miserable than we ever had been before. So it is that through darkness he leads us to the true light, through doubts and fears to the

blissful composure of confidence, through a painful sense of our own selfish pride to the enjoyment of a meek and quiet spirit. As Luther has said, "They only are exalted and made very high in the grace of God who have previously learned and felt what great sinners they are." Our sin must first appear in our eyes to be exceeding sinful, deserving the condemnation of the law. Deeply contrite and broken in heart, we must learn to cry aloud for mercy and forgiveness; and, never trusting for a moment to our own strength and righteousness, we must depend for all our righteousness only upon Jesus Christ. We must always abide in him and seek grace and sanctification in him alone. It is this that gives the death-blow to sin. My pardon does not depend upon my victory, but my victory upon my pardon I fight, but it is not with the thought that if I first conquer sin I shall then be forgiven: no, I implore forgiveness for Jesus' sake and believe that it is granted to me; and in this faith I go on to fight against sins which I know are already forgiven, as one who is bound in a covenant with God in Christ to resist sin in every shape and form. Thus I find joy, courage, strength, and victory.

DEC. 13.—*Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.* Jer. iii. 22. *When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.* Luke xv. 20.

HEAR, therefore, the voice of thy loving Father and Shepherd, (O thou backsliding child and lost sheep,) crying earnestly, Return, Return! Do not run on in the broad way with the world any longer. Art thou not tired yet of the husks of the world? Dost thou feel no troubles in thy soul? Shall not these drive thee to God? Lo! thy Father and Shepherd seeks thee. He is gone forth to call and meet thee already. He will receive thee willingly and joyfully. Approach him, praying as the prodigal son, and he will freely forgive thee, though thou hast sinned beyond what it is in thy power to describe. He is also able to heal the most desperate corruptions of thy heart. He can deliver thee from the very jaws of hell. Begin, then, to call upon him earnestly in prayer; and, poor and wretched as thou art, come to him as the Physician of thy soul; for the Physician and the sick, a rich Saviour and a poor sinner, are the best suited to one an-

other. He will heal all thy diseases, and will do great and wondrous things for thee.

From deep distress and troubled thoughts,
To thee, my God, I raised my cries:
If thou severely mark our faults,
No flesh can stand before thine eyes.

But thou hast built thy throne of grace,
Free to dispense thy pardons there,
That sinners may approach thy face
And hope and love, as well as fear.

Dec. 14.—*Watch ye, therefore, and pray always.* Luke xxi. 36. *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.* Heb. xii. 1.

The hearts of men are not like their clocks, which need at most to be wound up only once a day. They are liable to become inactive and to fall into disorder every moment, and must therefore be searched and excited without intermission. We should accompany all our actions with prayer, strictly examining the principles whence they flow, and anxious that those principles may be of the highest order. If we proceed according to this rule, accepting every monition from above, we shall both avoid many severe chastisements and glorify our

Father who is in heaven. A Christian has daily his proper burden, like a clock its weights, by which the flesh is kept under, so that the spirit may rise. Therefore, when any trouble occurs, he looks upon it as his weight for the day, to stir him up to the exercise of prayer and meditation on the word of God. O Lord, grant that I may always bear thine easy yoke and never be the cause of my own distress and dulness.

Ye servants of the Lord,
Each in his office wait,
Observant of his heavenly word
And watchful at his gate.

Oh, happy servant he,
In such a posture found!
He shall his Lord with rapture see
And be with honour crown'd.

DEC. 15.—*Give an account of thy stewardship.*
Luke xvi. 2.

"O LORD, how have I wasted my time, goods, and faculties! Pardon me for thine infinite mercy's sake; blot out my debt by thy blood, and grant that henceforth, keeping a daily

good account and acting more prudently, faithfully, and diligently, my reckoning may not be false at last. But preserve me also from all needless cares, and cause me cheerfully to prosecute the business which thou allottest me and to anticipate merciful support in all difficulties and afflictions. Teach me, O Lord, and give me wisdom and grace to govern my house and manage all my affairs rightly. Be thou the principal Governor and Father of my family. I would be nothing but thy servant: direct me only in all things, that I may not suffer or do any harm." He that does not expostulate with God, but accuses himself as guilty in all things, even his best performances, and flies to Christ as his only refuge, will be justified of God through the righteousness of his dear Son. Being thus adopted of God, he is ready and willing to be governed and directed by him in all things as a child.

That awful day will surely come—
The appointed hour makes haste—
When I must stand before my Judge
And pass the solemn test.

Thou lovely Chief of all my joys,
Thou Sovereign of my heart,

How could I bear to hear thy voice
Pronounce the sound, Depart!

DEC. 16.—*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.* 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

MANY might be induced to pray for faith if they did not presume that, because they are not heathens, Mohammedans, or Jews, they must therefore be Christian believers. Such as have faith often doubt the fact; while such as are destitute boast as if they possessed an abundance. Faith is wrought in the souls of those only who are deeply humbled by a thorough conviction of the greatness and heinousness of their sins, confessing themselves not only with their lips, but their hearts, to be the chief of sinners, and looking upon themselves as the most unworthy of all creatures. Without this repentance we do not enter through the right gate, and our faith is only fancy, a false imagination of our minds Faith is the greatest and most difficult thing even to a child of God: it receives Christ into the heart, and overcomes the devil, world, and all sins, —which is not easily done. But, if the

generality of people have true faith, nothing is easier than to believe. For what can be easier than to assent to the Bible as true,—which is all that the multitude intend when they say that they believe? There would be no need for men to pray for faith, or to examine themselves whether they have it. The wicked, therefore, who live in sin, deceive themselves in thinking that they have faith. For faith giveth the victory over the world. Those also who trust in their own works deceive themselves; for the prayer of faith is, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," "Lord, save, or I perish."

DEC. 17.—*For thy name's sake lead me and guide me. Pull me out of the net.* Ps. xxxi. 3–5. *When the ark set forward, Moses said, Rise up, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.* Numb. x. 35.

EVERY one is beset with his own particular enemies, who endeavour to obstruct, to deceive, and to destroy him. But, as the way is cleared for an earthly king when he travels for a comparatively low and limited purpose, much more shall valleys be exalted and hills be made low,

crooked places be made straight and rough places plain, when He whose throne is heaven, and whose footstool is the earth, comes forth for the salvation of his devoted people. Grant, O Lord, that all my goings and restings may have respect to thy will. Be pleased to go continually before me, and to make room, causing my spiritual enemies to flee before thee. Thou art able to confound their craft and power. Enlighten mine eyes, blessed Jesus, that I may see mine enemies distinctly, and strengthen my faith in thee, that I may not fear them. Be the Captain of my salvation: lead me on praying and believing, and do thou fight all my battles for me. So shall I come off conqueror through thy love, and will give to thee eternal praise.

Great God, preserve my conscience clean;
Wash me from guilt, subdue my sin:
Thy love shall guard me from surprise,
Though threatening dangers round me rise.

DEC. 18.—*Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.* Matt. xxiv. 42.

THE Christian watches with both eyes. Though they look at the same object, yet they

see it in two very different positions. With the one eye he ever sees himself a sinner; with the other he sees himself as a child of God in Christ, justified and freed from sin. Here we must watch continually; for if we look away and intently gaze upon other persons and other things, we shall be in danger of pride or of despondency. Neither of these can minister to our comfort in a dying hour.

Every hour I would be
True and faithful, Lord, to thee;
Every hour see thy face,
Grow in love, wax strong in grace;
Every hour awake anew
And the path of life pursue.
Every hour in prayer and praise
On thee I would fondly gaze;
Every hour, like a child,
Walk with thee, so meek and mild;
Every hour, with joyful heart,
In thy glory take a part.
Every hour let thy word
Make me patient, strong, O Lord;
Every hour I'll watch and pray
Sin's fell powers to crush and slay;
Every hour would onward move
In repentance, faith, and love;
Every hour in thee take root,
That I may yield fairer fruit;

Every hour redeem the time,
Upward to thy glory climb;
Every hour prepare to move
From the earth to heaven above:
Every hour, then, let me be
True and ready, Lord, for thee.

Dec. 19.—*What wilt thou, Queen Esther? And what is thy request? It shall be given thee, to the half of the kingdom.* Esther v. 3.

Dost thou want nothing, O my fellow-mortal? Hast thou nothing to ask? Yes, thou repliest, I need an infinite supply. Well, then, draw near to thy gracious King and Bridegroom without fear. Lo, he holds out his golden sceptre to thee, saying, "Only ask: not the half, but the whole, of my kingdom shall be granted: nay, I will give myself unto thee." Disclose to him, therefore, thy whole heart, mentioning all thy wants and grievances. Whatever is poured out before him is lodged in its proper place; he takes the burden from thee and encourages thee to hope for seasonable and full relief. If thou hast already experienced his loving-kindness, thy faith will rest upon him so much the more firmly. Be it

thine to persevere in fervent supplications. We may be tempted to suppose that his bounty and compassion fall short of our necessities and afflictions. But, in truth, he is far more in earnest as a Benefactor than we are as petitioners; or, to speak more explicitly and justly, it is he that *excites*, as well as promises to *fulfil*, all our desires.

Are those the happy persons here
Who dwell the nearest to their God?
Has God invited sinners near,
And Jesus bought them with his blood?

Go, then, my soul, address the Son,
To lead thee near the Father's face:
Gaze on his glories yet unknown,
And taste the blessings of his grace.

DEC. 20.—*What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?* Luke xviii. 41.

O LORD, dost thou ask *me* also this question? I answer, That I may see how gracious thou art, and that, knowing thy love, I may make the warmest and best return. This is the sum and substance of all my desire. Thou knowest that of myself I can contribute nothing to-

wards its accomplishment; but, in requiring me to ask, thou assurest me that thou art willing to bestow. Therefore, faith and love being thy demand, I humbly ask them at thy hands. Oh, grant them to me, that I may exercise them both for the manifestation of thy glory. Since nothing is pleasing to thee but what is thy own gift, I trust that thou wilt certainly hear and fulfil this my request. My salvation is not grounded on my own, but on thine and thy Father's love and counsel: save me, therefore, by free grace, through thy merits, and let me go on, covered all over with grace and pardon. This is treasure enough, by which my heart can be well satisfied.

No more with trembling heart I try
A multitude of things,
Still wishing to find out that point
From whence salvation springs.

My anchor's cast,—cast on a Rock,
Where I shall ever rest
From all the labour of my thoughts
And workings of my breast.

DEC. 21.—*In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.* Isa. xxx. 15. *In your patience possess ye your souls* Luke xxi. 19.

CHRISTIANS must suffer patiently; and patience is their armour, while God is fighting for them. But, when we are unwilling to suffer, going about to make complaints everywhere and to seek human comfort, or to rid ourselves by our own contrivances, we lose the comfort of the Lord's help; we are stirring up the wasp-nest of our unruly thoughts, and bring more trouble upon ourselves and others: nay, we are fighting against God, who thereby intends to cure our impatience, pride, and anger. The more peevish we are the more desperate is our disease, and, consequently, we have so much more need of such sharp but wholesome trials of affliction to mortify these bad passions. Therefore we must not presume to murmur or complain, which will only make bad worse. He who through impatience will flee from one trouble may run into ten others; and, though it were possible to free ourselves from trouble, yet the help is not so glorious and blessed as if we had waited for the help of the Lord.

Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near,
Thy Saviour's gracious promise hear;
His faithful word declares to thee
That as thy day thy strength shall be.

Thy faith is weak, thy foes are strong,
And, if the conflict should be long,
Thy Lord will make the tempter flee;
For as thy day thy strength shall be.

DEC. 22.—*Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge; but he that hateth reproof is brutish.* Prov. xii. 1.

WHAT evil can be affirmed of us, the root of which is not found in our hearts? While maintaining the holy conflict, God, who can make even the wrath of man to praise him, visits us with a sharp (and apparently undeserved) reproof from some unkind acquaintance. If we receive this as from above, turning it into an occasion of deeper self-examination and resolving more vigorously than ever to abstain from all appearance of evil, we certainly gain a great victory and blessing. But, if we grow impatient, and make many excuses, being determined to resent all slights and imputations, we aggravate the evil, and neglect the means

by which both others and ourselves might be improved. O Lord, correct our weakness, and conform us entirely to thy will and nature.

Be with me, Lord, where'er I go;
Teach me what thou wouldst have me do;
Suggest whate'er I think or say;
Direct me in the narrow way.

Prevent me, lest I harbour pride,
Lest I in mine own strength confide;
Show me my weakness; let me see
I have my power, my all, from thee.

Enrich me always with thy love;
My kind Protector ever prove;
Thy signet put upon my breast,
And let thy Spirit on me rest.

DEC. 23.—*For when I am weak, then am I strong.* 2 Cor xii. 10. *The Lord is my strength.* Exod. xv. 2.

THE more sensible we are of our own infirmity, the less inclined to confide in ourselves, the more able will we be to put our trust in the Lord. A want of confidence in God mostly springs from too great confidence in ourselves. Luther says, "A Christian always abides in the fear of God and reflects thus with himself:—

Grant, O Lord, above all things, that I may never displease thee! for the true spirit is always meek and gentle before God. But when Satan and the powers of darkness come before us, then the Holy Ghost supplies us with a courage truly heroic. Then the Christian says, What though I am but a worm? nevertheless I am strong, for the Lord is my strength, and who shall prevail against me? This battle is not against me, but against thee, O my God. Before thee I am weak; but thou art my strength. The devil may hold it to be an easy conquest; but when the battle is joined the Lord says, Behold, I am with you. Then it is as when the worm is put upon the hook: the fish takes it, but is itself thereby taken. So the Lord allows us to feel our weakness; but he has hidden his own power in our hearts, and by that he holds us up. When our spiritual foes come furiously upon us, they look and act as if they would eat us up: they do not see that it is God they undertake to devour. Their purposes and plans cannot succeed. Never!" Through the grace of God, even the violence of Satan may contribute to the strengthening of our faith.

DEC. 24 —*He that believeth shall not make haste.* Isa. xxviii. 16. *But lift thou up thy rod.* Exod. xiv. 16.

WE may confidently expect that every act of faith shall be followed by some new blessing from above. Faith sometimes waxes strongest even out of the occasions and circumstances of its greatest weakness. The Lord's eyes are upon the truth, for he helps us so willingly; but it accords with his plan not to help us until we have faith; for he always says, "Thy faith hath saved thee." Wilt thou be helped? only believe. Humble faith lays hold of God and in him finds all that it needs, and even more. (Matt. xv. 25.) Luther says, "Faith is really a miracle. It fills an otherwise weak and fearful soul with such courage that it says, If all the powers of darkness were to fall upon me, if the princes of this world, if heaven and earth, were to be leagued against me, still I know that I shall come off victorious. But, if a man does not believe, God will not do any mighty work for him. On the other hand, whoever does believe must be saved, though heaven and earth should pass away. God has promised it: if thou believest, thou shalt be saved. He thinks more of his word than he does of heaven and

earth; for it is by his word that he has made all things. Therefore it is his will that we should trust his word, though heaven and earth and all the stars should be against us. Therefore lay hold of the word of God, brandish it manfully in the face of your enemies, and you will soon see them fly away before you."

Dec. 25.—*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.* Luke ix. 23.

If we do this, then we shall find every thing else easy. Here we learn that we are nothing, and therefore worth nothing,—that we have nothing of our own and have nothing to lose. We cannot claim any thing as belonging to us; for we are only stewards. We have, in truth, in ourselves neither honour, nor shame, nor position; for our only honour is when God is glorified by us, and it is our only shame when we dishonour his name or bring reproach upon his cause. The honour and glory of God must always be first in our hearts. In standing up for God, we should be like lions, but in our own affairs we ought to be like lambs.

If any work is before thee, and thou enterest upon it neither for the glory of God nor for the good of thy fellow-man, but solely for thine own interest and with a spirit that will not endure self-denial, thy work will not prosper: it will only increase thy sorrows. Therefore deny thyself: thou wilt lose nothing except what may trouble thee, and wilt gain Christ, God's unspeakable gift; and with him thou wilt receive all temporal and spiritual blessings that may be good for thee, to fill thee with joy and peace. He, however, who in his works and ways consults the tastes of the world and seeks only his own glory, he neither acts like a disciple of Christ nor enjoys the peace of God; and how shall it be with him in the hour of death and in the day of judgment? Let every man examine himself:—whom does he seek to please, God or the world? Lord, I am nothing: be thou my All, and make me complete in thee.

DEC. 26.—*How long halt ye between two opinions?* 1 Kings xviii. 21.

MANY persons endeavour to please at once the children of God and the children of this world: to do this, they think, is a great achievement of wisdom. But God often overtakes the wise in their craftiness, and often puts them to shame in the presence of the world. O soul, how long wilt thou divide thy heart? How long wilt thou delay to make an entire and unconditional surrender to God? Dost thou desire eternal life? thou must be greatly changed; thou must walk with God and have a spiritual mind. But the more thou wilt delay and stipulate the harder wilt thou find the work of conversion to be. And how quickly may death overtake thee! What help can the world afford thee then? But if thou art the Lord's thou shalt be blessed a thousandfold both in life and in death. Therefore make haste; delay not about the terms of surrender. God demands thy whole heart. It is as if he said, "Mine it must be all, or not at all." He who does not surrender and yield every thing to God never attains to the enjoyment of perfect peace.

Why haltest thus, deluded heart?
Why waverest longer in thy choice?
Is it so hard to choose the part
Offer'd by Heaven's entreating voice?
Oh, look with clearer eyes again,
Nor strive to enter in, in vain.
Press on!

DEC. 27.—*How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!* Matt. xxiii. 37. *Who hath believed our report?* Isa. liii. 1.

How often does God seek to allure thee by his word! how often does he come to thee in times both of joy and of sorrow! But thou dost not observe it nor draw nigh to him. Thou art ever holding back with thy excuses, though all together they are of no account at all with God. Dost thou observe where the difficulty lies? Thou thyself wilt not come to him; and for that reason thou canst not. Thou wilt not follow the word of God; and therefore thou hast nothing but darkness, and holdest thyself apart both from God and his children. Lord, deliver me from the spirit of vanity and lies, that I may never be offended in thee. Let my heart ever acquiesce in thy dealings, which are

all faithfulness; let me be a willing subject of thy grace and be bound to thee in the cords of everlasting love. Yea, Lord, deliver me from all the powers of darkness, and let no sin have dominion over me. Amen.

Ah, how blindly did we stray
  Ere shone forth this glorious Sun,
Seeking each his separate way,
  Leaving heaven unsought, unwon!
All our looks were earthwards bent;
All our strength on earth was spent.

Thy arising, Lord, shall fill
  All my thoughts in sorrow's hour;
Thy arising, Lord, shall still
  All my dread of Death's dark power.
Through my smiles, and through my tears,
Still thy light, O Lord, appears.

DEC. 28.—*Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you.* John vi. 27. *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day.* John ix. 4. *The time is short.* 1 Cor. vii. 29.

MANY a man undertakes much, and labours and studies with great diligence, in order that

his name may be adorned with the distinctions of learning. All this secures no reward, yields no good fruit for eternity. (Matt. vi. 1–5.) Lord, how are the years of my life hurrying away! How little have I accomplished hitherto! How much of my time and my strength have been wasted even by my indulgence in vain thoughts and unprofitable fancies! What good fruit can sinful words and works ever yield? Lord, I could not answer thee for one in a thousand. I blush for shame, and fall down before thee. Oh, forgive, forgive! Let me hereafter redeem the time. Let me henceforth employ my strength and time for the most profitable and useful purposes,—especially in prayer for myself and others. Let the spirit of supplication dwell in me every hour, that I may be always ready to depart and be blest in the eternal world, among those whose works shall follow them. O Lord, let the incorruptible inheritance always engage my heart and be ever kept in view.

Yonder in joy the sheaves we bring
Whose seed was sown on earth in tears;
There in our Father's house we sing
The song too sweet for mortal ears:
Sorrow and sighing all are past,
And pain and death are fled at last.

There with the Lamb of God we dwell:
He leads us to the crystal river,
He wipes away all tears forever:
What there is ours no tongue can tell

Dec. 29.—*We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.* Rom. xii. 5.

Oh, the blessed communion of saints! One member has the benefit of all the other members' gifts, prayers, and ministrations. One prays for all, and all pray for one. What one has, the other enjoys also. It may be truly said to them, All is yours. There is no envy, no haughtiness, no strife, among real saints. For why should I indulge envy towards another on account of his possessing that which I also enjoy? Why should I despise that which accommodates and assists me? And why should I strive against him whose sufferings involve my own? Is there any strife between the members of our natural body? By no means: they all serve one another: if one be injured, the rest contribute what they can towards its relief, never desisting till it appear that their efforts are unavailing. O Lord, unite us all in

hearty fellowship and tender feelings for each other, and heal all divisions, whether obvious or secret; suffer not the proud, selfish, and litigious spirit of the world to influence the members of thy body, but bless and grace them all with true humility. Then we shall live in a solid union and uninterrupted harmony.

Great Spirit of immortal love,
Vouchsafe our frozen hearts to move;
With ardour strong these breasts inflame
For all that own a Saviour's name.

Still let the heavenly fire endure,
Fervent and vigorous, true and pure;
Let every heart and every hand
Join in the dear fraternal band.

Dec. 30.—*Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.* Ps. cxxvii. 1.

Luther says, "Trust to the Lord to build your house and then to support your family. Do not interfere with him in his work. It is his peculiar province to provide for the wants of the household, as much as it is to build the house: it is not your business. Whoever is the head and master of the house should be

allowed to furnish its supplies. If much is needed, God is, of course, more than able to produce it all. He who fills heaven and earth can certainly fill a house. No wonder that men often feel worried by the want of many things, when they do not see nor acknowledge God to be the head of their families. If you do not look to him who alone can fill the house, you will be sure to see many a corner, many a place, empty and bare; but if you look to him, though there even should be some emptiness around you, you'll never notice it: you'll think every thing is full and plenty; and so in reality it will be. Now, if you do not enjoy abundance and plenty, it is the fault of your own eye-sight,—as the misery is only in the eyes of the blind man, who, even when the sun shines, cannot see it. But if a man sees God right by faith, then how great the change! Instead of being worried with a sense of poverty in his family, he is busy and cheerful in good works, and from his house there flow out streams of mercy, bread for the hungry and clothing for the naked. Lord, grant me faith and love, and a knowledge of thy will, that, as the labourer receives his reward, I may ever look to thy gracious hand for all things. May I be a

faithful steward, using every talent as thou hast designed, and wisely spending for thy glory every thing committed to my hands! Thy treasury is mine; and it is rich enough."

I'll follow whither thou dost guide,
And have no care for aught beside.

DEC. 31.—*In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve.* Jer. l. 20. *And I will remember their sin no more.* Jer. xxxi. 34.

LORD, I remember my transgressions, I think of my sins as being naked and open to the eyes of thy glory, and I am ashamed and confounded before thee. Men sometimes forgive, and turn themselves for a season from their anger; but thou, not after the manner of men, wilt fully and completely pardon all my iniquities; thou wilt deal towards me as though thou hadst not known that I have ever sinned against thee in all the past years of my life. Thou wilt regard me in time and through eternity as thy dear child, against whom no

charge of sin or transgression can be brought Thou seest in me neither sin, nor spot, nor blemish, but only thy dear Son, and his precious blood, and the beauty of his grace. Therefore thou lovest me as thou lovest the Son, (John xvii. 16,) more than I love myself. My love is but human love; but thine is Divine, perfect, and everlasting. So lovest thou the Son, so lovest thou my soul; for through faith I even am one with him, a member of his body, a child of his grace, an heir of his glory. Canst thou frown upon him? No, never. And thou wilt not frown upon me; for sin, which alone provokes thy displeasure, is perfectly and eternally taken away. It shall be sought for, and there shall be none.

Shall my sins be submerged in the depths of the main,
  Or pass from God's sight, like a vapour away?
Who, who shall array them before me again?
  Where, where shall their record be suffer'd to stay?
No! now and forever I'll rejoice in this word:—
My pardon is perfect, through Jesus my Lord.

THE END.

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